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Raven.- Two years in Wall

Street. 1877.

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TWO YEARS IN WALL STREET;

OR,

WHY WAS I BORN?

CONSISTING OF

RICHES, JOKES, AND DISAPPOINTMENTS.

BY NIL RAVEN.

NEW YORK:
AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,
1877.

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DEDICATION.

To all who in
  The world, the flesh,
And Wall Street be,
  All that within
These pages fresh
  You e'er may see,
I gladly give.
  Where'er you live,
O saint or sin-
  ner, bond or free,
O wise man, fool or craven,
  Believe me,
    Yours,
      NIL RAVEN.

Ho, ye who are sorry!
  All ye who are sad
With turmoil and worry,
  Rejoice and be glad!

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PREFACE.

At the request of a personal friend, and other motives, I have been imposed upon to set forth some of my private affairs, as I see fit. Upon a reconsideration I have decided to accept it, and I purpose giving the history of "Two Years in Wall Street; or, Why was I Born?" the first as experienced by myself; the latter is open to speculation—in which I give my reasons for coming to Wall Street, also my reasons for leaving it, and other things, such as my great success at first, wherein I experienced a good many new sensations, such as happiness, love, etc.—finally failing, horrible feelings and other struggles, a terrible combat with editors of the N. Y. press and other papers, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc., ending in no luck; letters to Brooklyn divines, asking for help, getting none; trying to find a place to preach, but vainly; striving to lecture and to throw a few gems before some appreciative audience, but all to no

purpose; going through many new and useless struggles, until finally I was led to exclaim:

I wish I was a frog,
For reasons personal!
I would perch upon a log,
And wildly curse on all
The world in general;
Man and mummy, fish and fowl,
Monkey, rabbit, hooting owl,
Kangaroo and wailing cat,
Bumbling bee and blur-eyed bat,
Wrinkled cur and full-grown dog,
Buffoon, baboon, bug and hog,
Orang-outang, cub and crow,
Other things of crooked toe;
All should feel my howling curse
Curdling thro' the universe,
If I was a frog.
I would wrack my life with frenzy,
Till a clogging influenza
Wrestled with my gurgling breath,
When, thick stuffed with quiet fog,
I would hurl me off the log,
And fret myself to death
In the bog,
If I was a frog!

TWO YEARS IN WALL STREET;

OR,

WHY WAS I BORN?

CHAPTER I.

WALL STREET BEGUN WHEN I WAS OUT OF ORDER.

Once I was born for the first time, and for personal reasons I would not have it repeated. Not that I have any crude objections to life as a game, but that I began too early for success, being handed down to the world without any forethought or preparation. But when a man's born he's born, and what's the use of moralizing with your neighbors about it?

Before I begin, I would like to say a few words about myself. I have been living in the world more than a score of years. And while we are on the world, I would like to remark that it is the most amusing place of its size and kind that I ever witnessed. I have had more fun here than I ever had. More in fact than was necessary to success or friends.

As for my friends, they are mostly perished; they were

never spared to me long; my climate was too severe, I guess.

Owing to some physical disability in our family, none of my parents lived to see me blossom.

Dear me! I wish they had lived to be proud of me, and I sometimes wonder if they would know me with my moustache on. In speaking of their disability, I sometimes think the same thing has been descended on me way down to the fourth generation.

As I had no friends, I was forced to live with a relative, a maiden named Kezia, and altho' I loved her, yet her name brings up bad memories. We were not what might be styled congenial spirits, and lived on the farm my father had left me in her care.

But the way she forced work out of me was ruinous to my comfort. Early I made up my mind that I was not made for work (which, by the way, is good enough in its place, but I never seemed able to find a place for it), and hankered for other things.

I hated to be unhappy, but my relative had a strange faculty of making me the saddest thing I ever saw. Long before sunrise she would scream at me like a long neglected owl crying for food.

I can hear her pointed tongue yet, as it then vibrated in my dreams—

"Come, come, you lazy coon; up, up, and fetch the cows."

If anybody may wonder how it sounded, I would suggest that it probably wouldn't remind you of an Æolian harp.

While still young, I decided that we could not be blissful together, unless one of us died. In regard to death, I have wondered why, when we become tolerably used to the world and its amusements, we die. But I will not moralize. I would rather joke. And now we are near the turning point of my life, which has been full of turning points. As my relative grew older, she had an idea that I could do everything that pertained to the good of the farm. Perhaps I could; but it always made me blush to think of coming to the world, and working myself to death, just for the comfort of a relative. The farm belonged to me; but under her fostering hand, I had been in reality supporting her and buying my own estate. I have thought since that I would'nt do it again. I staid there until I was nineteen, in which time I had become pretty well known, having been twice afflicted with an epidemic, which was the result of impaired digestion, prompted by being followed too rapidly a neighboring bull; also having fallen in love with a school teacher of nearly double my summers—a girl; but as my relative didn't approve of my choice, I determined to leave all, and find a home. So, two years ago, last October, I bade a happy farewell to relative, weeping school teacher, and old Chenango; and, standing on the rear platform of the last car, waved my 'kerchief till the old things faded out of sight; and if a tear fell, it was only in fun. Perchance later I may have shed a tear to be back again, clasped tenderly in the arms of my relative and school teacher. But let it pass; for now my story begins. I have finished talking about myself, and will tell you about the things I saw, and what I did; how I felt, and how I feel.

CHAPTER II.

The next morning revealed to me the wonder of my new world—New York City. It is still a wonder to me: and if I was to live over again, I sometimes wonder if I would make my home here; but as I have no direct evidence of any disposition to try a second course of life, I will continue my story.

Dazed at the wealth and splendor about me, I wandered in ecstacy in her busy streets. I was in a new and splendid world, and was very ambitious to begin owning something at once.

I had come for a change and to get rich. Already beautiful rows of granite seemed rising before me, saying, "we are yours." Already I could see the white wings and hear the shrill songs of my own ships. I wish to add that this was only my style of fancy; and I hope no one will take offense at any remarks I chance to make, as I ain't used to story-telling, and would rather joke. While I am in the mood, I will mention a circumstance that I rarely allude to in public, but if you have ever been forced to live long or much, you will probably recollect that there are some things in your experience that you take a quiet pride in concealing. For instance, you may be in debt, or deceived in regard to the affections of an acquaintance from whom you had hoped for better things, until she suddenly shocked you with a cold heart when you least expected it. If so, you will easily get my meaning when I say that, on entering New York, I had $1,500 in as good money as our govern-
t ever issued; but let trivial things pass; my business

is now with my story. I will only say that if you have any money to invest, which you want to keep quiet about, always invest in things that pay an interest and dividend larger than the principal, and you will have little trouble in holding your peace in the presence of your friends, thereby finding rest for your body and peace for your soul.

CHAPTER III.

I will also state that I had a second cousin somewhere in the city. I would also add that I have since wished I never had a second cousin anywhere. But lest I should wander in my remarks, I will say that I found him one night after considerable searching; found him at his home, where he received me tenderly and without reserve. I was proud of his fine looks and marble countenance, and, for a while, wished that he had been more dear to me; but I was young then.

Now, in speaking of second cousins, I told him I had come to rise, and asked if he could advise me of the shortest and quickest way to rise the highest. He said he could. I told him the higher I rose the better. Then he laid a caressing hand on my right shoulder, and smiling winfully, said, "My boy, you are smarter than most of your sex." Then I caught up the broken thread and added, "You are the best second cousin I ever had." He told me that he was a stock broker, that he bought and sold for others, and took a small commission for his trouble. How noble, I thought, to be so unselfish. His speech was as soft and flowing as a stream.

He spoke of stocks at length, dwelling especially on fortunes that he had seen spring up 'neath his careful eye, sometimes in an hour; of gains men had made through his assistance, until my heart panted for more room, and my hot blood burned my swelling veins.

In my zeal I cried, "Is there a chance for me?" Then I was undisciplined. I am older now. Again that same delightful smile o'erspread his lips (my memory of places is good), and he softly but impressively said, "My boy, there is chance for anybody who will take it; in Wall street there is no respect of persons." Candor compels me to add that time has convinced me of the truth of his remarks, especially of the last. "Any one," he continued, "who has a little money, has the key to let him into Wall street, and once within he can go out at leisure. Any one who watches the market closely can make money. Be careful, and you will succeed." Time has taught me that if you succeed you will probably be careless. He also said, "Many a young man with less than you have has made thousands, and settled down a richer and a happier man."

That night I staid with him, but not to sleep; all night I lay dreaming of things to come—a kind of failing peculiar to our family—brought about as a means of entertainment, a continual dreaming of things to come, owing to the dearth of things present. Morning came, but it seemed as if weeks passed between sunrise and my cousin's public appearance. Finally, just as I had concluded that he slept every alternate day as a means of health or comfort, he greeted me with surprise at my early habits, and said, "My boy, I think I can make a little money for you to-day if you wish to invest $500."

Grasping his hand, I cried, "I am ready, and wouldn't be afraid to trust a million to you." I was young then, and wouldn't repeat the assertion.

CHAPTER IV.

While he invested my money, I went into the Stock Exchange gallery, where I could look on the lively mass below. It was a sudden experience to me. I was bewildered at their acts, and wondered if this was the "beauties of getting rich in Wall street;" and if riches procured in this manner lasted long. Some of the men seemed very scared, running from their adversaries, who were shouting as they chased. It made my blood buzz to see one fellow pursued until he found standing room, when he screamed till his face was red, and his friends clustered around him and he was saved. Then I grew worried, thinking they were quarreling over my money. For an instant I paled and felt queer. I soon recovered, knowing I must be wrong, and the rest of the day stood carefully watching the market.

I would here advise foreigners desirous of learning our tongue in its purity, and quickly, not to inhabit the Stock Exchange for the sake of free instruction. My advice to others is not to frequent it at all, unless to see a sick friend.

The day passed, and, true to his word, my cousin gained what would make me proud of him forever. He had made more than my wildest hopes had whispered, $300, and nobly divided with me. An instant I paused to moralize thus: "Well, well, who would have thought, when I was standing

around doing nothing, that I was making money so fast? Whew! what would my relative say? Wouldn't she act strange if she knew it?" Then a smothered stream of rapture broke out which I strove to conceal, lest folks should think something was wrong. The world was now another place, or I had changed. Old things had passed away. I had begun a new life, and scornfully laughed at corn hoeing; plowing and mowing shrunk out of my memory, as strange and primitive ways of forcing a living. Then I grew wondrous proud; in short, I was a boy no longer. One day in Wall street had made a man of me. Proudly I looked up, conscious of my power. No one could look over me. Wall street seemed smaller, and I conceived the plan of buying everything up from Broadway to the river. Yes, yes; I can soon do it at this rate, was my song. Suddenly, the stream of wealth, glittering with golden drops, had darted before me, and so near that my hand could reach out and take freely.

CHAPTER V.

My second cousin called me smart, and I respected his judgment; under his direction, my money-making capacity so increased that I grew amazed at my latent talent, and was throbbing to diffuse the suddenly acquired force. As to my habits, the strongest fluid I had as yet imbibed was pressed from the hillside bovine; and I had smoked nothing stronger than morning fog. But, to be free of speech, I rejoiced in the oyster. He was new to me, but not neglected.

In my glory I yearned to dwell in beautiful apartments, and get used to nice things as soon as possible. Since I was one of those doomed to success—and all unsought, as you might say—my second cousin advised me to go to a fashionable place, where I would meet a polishing influence, as I had come from the country, and was perhaps somewhat crude. This last fact was established in my memory by the post-mortem testimony of my friends. And in looking at myself through the telescope of two years, I would say I was as healthy a piece of clay as was ever moulded into the form of a boy; good-natured as a domestic cow; as honest as a village school teacher, and truth, burning brighter with the fuel of the past, compels me to add, as graceful as a colt.

My second cousin told me of a place on Columbia Heights, where I could dwell in safety and among the select of the earth, as he expressed it, for $30 per week. But what was that to me? in first society too. For I had never been in any better company than our rural village afforded. I would only add that time has made me the revelation that true refinement is a plant peculiar to no particular soil or climate.

Columbia Heights are a part of Brooklyn, overlooking a portion of East River and the bay and other islands in the vicinity. I would advise strangers to go there and get an idea of commerce as manifested publicly on the bay. If any one should wish to send a child to sea, it would be a good plan to send him to see Columbia Heights as a preparation. My cousin took me over and introduced me. I never saw such finery before; furniture to dazzle a common eye, but mine was not common. The lady received me cor-

dially, for my cousin said, "He is one of our rising men." I shall never forget her sweet, motherly smile.

There was a time when nothing could have forced me into such a place; but put money in a man's pocket, with a prospect for more, and how quickly it drives away the clouds. My second cousin went with me to my room, and, among other things, said, "You will meet quite a company at the dinner table. You won't mind it, will you?" "Oh, no," I said, hastily adding, "can't you stay and dine with me?" But he could not; he only said, "Be careful about the use of your knife at the table, and all will be well," and vanished. But not so the words. They rung with increasing clamor, "Be careful about the use of your knife at the table." I trembled and grew scared, and wondered if they had some new and strange style of knife, since he dwelt so particularly on it. Then I thought I would hurry after him, and ask his meaning, but while I was pondering, my ears were smitten with the dulcet sound of a hilarious dinner-bell from below, and, for the first time in my life, that sound roused no spontaneous internal response; suddenly my appetite forsook me, and I was truly alone. Then I heard approaching feet, beating to the tune of the still vibrating bell, and a gentle tapping on the door, and a voice saying, "Ah, Mr. Raven, and will you come; the dinner is all ready and waiting, and the others are awaiting your presence." Heavens! how my heart went. If my days were to be measured by heart-beats. I sigh for the time so foolishly lost in my preparation for the first real sorrow of my life. As blandly as possible I said, "I am ready," and offered to take her arm. But she, thinking the stairs might be too narrow for the full development

of such unexpected gallantry on my part, wisely forbore and went before. The only thing that aroused me to a sense of my real importance was my bulging wallet, whose presence probably affected me much as balm would.

On I tripped through the devious mazes of that house, until I was ushered, full blast, into the presence of my equals.

If I looked at all blank, it was only in a momentary forgetfulness of my success and general motive in living.

I was introduced all at once. All smiled, and so did I. I supposed then that it was only the natural outflow of kindred souls. Of late I have not reveled extensively in the mysteries of kindred souls. The kind lady gave me a seat between two girls of disastrous comeliness, as I afterwards learned (for my glances during that session were only in straight lines).

Then the words of my cousin rang louder than ever. Cautiously but hastily I surveyed the article before me. Joyfully I saw nothing formidable about it, but kept a keen eye on the alert.

Gaily upon me swooped the slight but restless waiter, mumbling her short but tuneful song about my ear. Gravely I told her to suit herself and I was suited. I did not know what to do, and was going through the agony of an ordinary death at the rate of one a second. But I went to conquer. Of course, it rather bothered me to get my feet tangled up under the table, where I couldn't see to unfix them. Every silent move I made only made things more complex, until finally one foot rested on something that seemed substantial. I now think it was the round of an opposite chair;

for, suddenly losing hold, it went—I know not where; yet, owing to the rapid but painful changes on the features of a mild but elderly man across the way, my doubts as to its final resting place have never been severe.

Then there was shuffling in hot haste by the mild but elderly man.

In order to be on the safe side, I utterly neglected my knife, and the riches of Egypt could not have hired me to put a fork to my mouth, so I ate my potato and other affairs with a spoon. Then the lady said, sweetly, "Do you drink tea?" I said, "Yes, if you please; but don't bother about it." I was conscious of my folly. I knew everybody was looking at me, and did not raise my eyes much above the plane of the table, for personal reasons. I was haunted with questions like this: "Do they know I am from the country, I wonder?" Raising my eyes a little, I met the petrifying glance of one whose influence wildly made my blood to caper about my senseless head. I was in pain; for she seemed keeping back something in the shape of a smile. For an instant, I would have been elsewhere; but soon reviving, a stoical look was assumed, and gazing boldly across, I met her eye. It did not kill me, if it did make my breath waver. Ah, she was lovely, and I wondered if I ever should marry—(excuse me, if for a moment I forgot the school teacher of Chenango in the twilight of the eyes before me.) She was the lady's daughter.

As all things of life end, so did the dinner; but I never felt as much internal din, or, to be literal, it was the most inordinate meal of my life. As my story must be short, I will not lead you into all the little after-dinner experiences

and brilliant conversations which were mine. Let it suffice to know that in the late night I sought my room, after a celestial entertainment by the lady and her daughter.

Did I sleep that night?—not much.

CHAPTER VI.

Day by day my money, exuberant with vitality, gathered to itself larger golden grains; and the days—how they glided—as gold, time's great lubricator, oiling its eternal works, hushed every rasping sound as the days shot in and out, weaving their new and varied colors into life's changing fabric.

During my stay with my relative, I had been taught to hoard up everything I could get, for the sake of the evil day, as she called it. Formerly, to have anything, I had to save; now it made no difference, my pocket was ever full, while my bank account increased. To be brief, I quickly learned the ways of a gentleman, buying a pair of kids daily, and other affairs complex and fashionable. It is pleasant to reflect that, for a spell, there was a grandeur about my dress that don't always exist. O, the world was in its place—at my feet. That reminds me of a remark made by a Mr. Carlyle; something about making your wants 0, &c. Well, it is only another evidence to my mind of the similarity of some things, for my wants were generally a number zeros mixed in with other characters of the Arabic notation. I pitied all on whom fortune smiled not, was lenient towards the beggar, and lunched at Delmonico's, where the little bills

were only glanced at and paid. I have since thought, that if a man had a small family hungry, the little sums lavished in this manner might, if wisely applied, afforded the small family much amusement, in the way of a change.

The lady and her daughter, ever smiling on me, strove to furnish me with varied and flashing diversions; under their careful affection, I soon developed a surprising appetite for the theatre, and hired a little box for myself and as many of my friends as thought well of such things. In fact, I became so infatuated with this kind of amusement, that I was almost persuaded to be an actor myself—to be in Wall street by daylight and on the stage by gaslight. But my friends advised me not to attempt it, and I received a note from the manager of a theatre, saying he didn't need me. But I don't go to the theatre any more. For personal reasons. If you have any children, I wouldn't advise you to take them there. I wouldn't if I had any. They will learn soon enough to go alone.

CHAPTER VII.

I loved her daughter,
Because I thought her,
The prettiest
And much the best
Of anybody.

My love was spontaneous, for I loved the first time I glanced that way.

Talk of beauty, if you will.

None e'er dreamed of such as her's; meditate on hair if

you choose, but don't compare it with her's. O Chenango, where art thou now? say, where is thy shrunken glory? These were my first sentiments, and she grew more winsome with time.

Her thoughtful mother ever let her accompany me to operas and other gay affairs 'round which the festive fibres of youth fondly cluster for nurture.

Always on returning from these, gently would we linger about the parlor to visit and lay pleasing plans for the morrow. And when the midnight hands of the clock, an instant silently clasping, pointed to the center of eternal harmony and love, marvel not, if by some mysterious smypathy, other hands, through which one quick pulse sung lovingly, were clasping too. Since my memory of dates is good, I shall probably never forget the last glorious time when it was night, and without were storms and wailing winds, and other things which make life desirable within. Early in the evening, the parlors were gay, but gradually a quietness stole o'er the interior, until all but ourselves had dispersed; yet we were not lonely—we were too young.

The storm sweetly howling, and the little grate fire glowing, were company enough. I think we were happy. Our talk was rambling, but sweet, as I now remember it. There was more quantity than quality perhaps, and sometimes there were intervals of silent beauty as we gazed at the fire, or heard the restless tongue of the animated clock chewing its eternal cud, in short but even strips, until my own tongue resumed its cunning, and I asked her if she cared if I liked her. And she said, and she blushed, "O, Nil! what a question." Then I continued, asking her if she was

ever engaged to anything. "Never," she said; "how could you be so cruel?"

Her lovely lashes drooped;
Her rose-red lips assumed
A new rotundity;
I thought that she would weep,
Forsooth so very deep
Was her profundity
Of sentiment in seeming,
But by a dextrous move
I hushed the welling tear.
In her pure eye a gleaming.

And again I fell into a fit of unpremeditated silence, from which I finally emerged thus—

Dear Caroline—
Sweet Caroline,
Quivering I mumbled,
And nervously fumbled
Over her little soft warm hand,
O, lovely, lovely Caroline
Say—
O, can you live—
O, say—without me?
Breathless I waited,
But she yielded no response,
A little tremble in her hand,
Only told me she had heard.

O, Caroline, I said,
I know my face was red),
Won't you please talk a little
And still she did not stir,
A deeper silence fell,
And then I knew full well,
My time to act had come.

It was my early vow
That I would never bow
My knee to any woman.

But I am only human,
And involuntarily
Glided kneeward
Agitatedly.

I pressed her finger tips and eagerly gazing into her half curtained orbs; rich worlds, soft floating in a slumbrous sea.

I tried to read therein her love—my fate.

It was the first true minute of my career.

And after another vain struggle with my feelings, I burst forth somewhat in the following manner:

O, my pearly gem,
O, you sweet affair,
O, dear—O, dear,
Caroline,
Mine only mine,
Thou art—thou art.
O, I must die.
If you should try,
From me to part,
O, tell me I am yours;
O, blossom rare,
Bid my full heart revive.

* * * * * * * * * *

She trembled and said she would, and now you must wait while I continue my story, for it exhausts me to talk on love; and had things been different in Wall street, it might never have been my lot thus to reflect my feelings.

CHAPTER VIII.

For nine months after entering Wall street, a steady stream of success was mine. Never did a youth feel his talents more than did I, when the hands on the dial of time, the short one pointing to nine months and the long one to $11,000 in the bank, told me I was fortune's favorite.

The gold mine was open; I could take as much as I willed, and I am sorry that I didn't take more. One day as I stood surveying things near the scene of my triumphs, a little gayer perhaps than usual; it was the day after the rainy night when the winds were wild, and the little grate fire gleamed on the girl who said "she would," and naturally

visions were playing around my fancy; on that day an old man came quietly to my side, and taking my hand, said, "My boy, I have grown gray in Wall street, and know its ways. Now believe me, when I tell you that your success has been remarkable, considering your youth, but let me give you a little rule that has known few exceptions in my memory; every man who plays in Wall street is beaten in Wall street, and at his own game. I have seen men who have made thousands in a minute on a sudden turn in the market, and have told them to go, and come no more; but the fascination was too great; they would say, one more good haul, and then good-by to Wall street—'tis a risky place, and although a golden stream flows through her midst, those who linger round the banks, trying to scoop up a little in their hands, are generally pushed in by the clamorous pack behind and swallowed—for

Fortunes grow in Wall street
Sometimes in a single day,
With dazzling light,
They burn till night.
But in darkness fade away.

"Now, young man, you feel smart, but you are no smarter than hundreds of others who have been ruined, having been so deluded by the false glow and excitement as to be ever afterward worthless. Take my advice—with whatever else you have—and go, never return to gamble again. It is a bad way of getting money; heed my words or—mark me—you will repent" (old men ain't always truthful in Wall street, but there are exceptions). He also said, "To-day you have many friends—to-morrow you may have none—for friend-

ship here means only one thing: can you do me any good? can I use you? To-day they hang on you, because you are willing to support them; to-morrow if you should need support, you would be forced to hunt for it." I tried to calm my friend, and thanking him, said I would think the matter over. What he said, although it seemed old-manly, rather worried me, and, for a minute, I tried to think how I would feel if I should lose all; then I laughed, for I knew that any of my friends would lend me enough to begin on again.

CHAPTER IX.

Occasionally the form of my relative rose in my mind, and I conceived the thought of sending her a present of $1,000 just to amuse her, as I didn't know but that she would doubt me when I told her of my good fortune, unless I proved it in some such way. With the impulse I made a check for the same amount to her order, and wrote a short letter, using these words as nearly as I can recollect:

Dear Kezia (she had been named after Job's second daughter, because she was the fairest woman in the land—I mean Job's daughter. I am not speaking about my relative's looks; but will add, that, had her parents lived to see her bloom, they might have doubted the origin of the bible, as far as the meaning of its precious names is concerned. But to continue with my letter.)

I hope you are well. You must be advancing in life, and so I thought it might do you good to know that I am having a tolerably good time, except when I am missing you.

I don't forget you at all. I sometimes get thinking of you, and can't stop until I am worn out: but I am going to surprise you. I am going to give you $1,000 for a present. I have made a check for you, but didn't know but that it would bother you, so I want you to write and tell me if I shall send it, or put it in a bank in New York till I com home to see you. Good by.

Ever your loving NIL.

P. S.—I have decided to send the check in the letter.

CHAPTER X.

Success is not eternal, either in the history of nations or of individuals.

I had sent my letter, and really felt glad of my generosity, when suddenly my second cousin burst hotly o'er me, saying, "My boy, I have a chance—a chance, a great chance for you! Look! this stock will go up 50 per cent. in less than twenty-four hours. Now is your time; but be quick, for everybody is buying." I hurriedly glanced at it, and cried, "All right, I will invest all," and bought to the extent of my capital, forgetting to reserve what I had just given away. And then I waited in suspense.

* * * * * * * * *

I am still waiting.

* * * * * * * * *

I would rather skip this part of my story, but for the benefit of those who will come after me, will wade through it as quickly as possible. In less than two hours a loud roar-

ing suddenly issued from the throats of many enraged bulls, and an occasional bear, of Wall street. Things had changed, and I would remark here that my second cousin's remarks were not always exact as regards the eternal relations of things to man—that is, he had no clear idea as regards direction. North and south were only names to him. They were good in conversation, but had no significance. Also, the small words "up" and "down" were carelessly used. Herein lies my misery. In his confusion of words—Had he said, the stock will go down, and it had gone up—I could have overlooked his fault; but—

I can't talk any more on this subject. I will only add, that a kind of game had been played without my knowledge, and the stocks had dwindled in value so much that all I had was swept away, saving a little worthless paper and nothing. And I took up with my friend's advice, and left.

* * * * * * * * *

O, Calamity! thou art a plant of hasty growth, and thy fruit can cure no ache. O, what a wreck! How was I dashed on the hidden rocks! I could have wept, but didn't. I was sick—sick and lonely, and vowed vengeance dire on the doer of the deed. I would remark that I have not found him. Yet some were laughing over things, and asked me how I enjoyed the game. But I had no disposition to quote, and went out to howl in secret. Were you ever embarrassed? If so, how much? If you choose, you may hunt through any dictionary of your own, or your friend's, and you can't find a single word to express my feelings of then. I don't say that I have hunted any dictionary through, but I do know that such a word can't be got up by man, woman,

Jew or Patagonian, for such words don't exist. I am th only one that ever had such feelings, and have no time t tell you of the word I have made to express it. I woul only say that it is considerably longer than some I hav seen, and that I have not yet quite completed it, owing to lack of letters in our alphabet.

But as I am soon going to the land of Confucius as means of change—I hope to find something there to f the gap—but I must not, will not joke; 'tis wrong in su an hour.

CHAPTER XI.

From Chenango to the glittering summit of my greatness rapidly have I led you. If you are weary, rest, and leisurely trace your way back in the sunshine. But there is no rest for me. An instant the world is mine and rolling in my eye, and then again I am hers. She trembles and carelessly rolls and tumbles me down the other side, where the fog and darkness hide the sunshine, and the crags confuse my struggling sense.

Lean over and look, if you like, but don't follow, for the ways of adversity are peculiar.

O, visions of youth! how they vanish; Wall street, illusion, why wast thou?

Nil Raven! say, where is thy glory?

Like an old man cut down in his youth, or a beehive robbed in the winter, went I to my home that night, but not to revel in the things that give comfort to the weary. No eating or sleeping were done in my presence. But seeking my room (mine no more) rashly around it beat my feet in unison with a clanging discord in my head, while I poured forth the trembling fragments of my perturbed soul, thus:

O, O, alas! confusion and sting; 'tis too much; I can't stand it. How can I live? Savagely had been torn from me what had become my life. My appetite had fed on the new till it couldn't go back to the old. (Experience has proved to me that man is fearfully and wonderfully made, and can live on anything he can get.) In my agony I exclaimed:

"To be or not to be,"
That's what's the matter with me
Just now.
I would not wish to make a fuss,
But things have suddenly grown wuss,
Somehow!

And

Life's but a fleeting shadow,
Anyway, I'm glad, O, &c.

Then the old saying of my grandmother stole in to pacify, viz., young man, *beware! beware!* O there was much of unfelt solace in these words.

The lady of the house must have heard of me racing about regardless of her property, for I heard her tapping at the door, followed by—"Mr. Raven, the dinner is ready; will you come?" I told her I had enough, and wasn't hungry.

I longed to fling myself into one of her arms, and weep to death under her care and that of her daughter, but I didn't. I only told her that I fell in Wall street, and felt shook up.

She asked me if I would have some boneset. I calmly told her nay. For I knew that no juice of herb, or flower, howsoever fantastically concocted by feminine art, could heal the bruises of a fall in Wall street. Again I was alone, if the piercing tortures of a healthy memory are no company.

Deserted by my money, I felt abashed and solitary, "but I won't go back to milking," I cried, "and you can't stay here," something else replied. O what infernal demon made me use my relative's money; but such thoughts only made me more boisterous; her check had been canceled by the wrong man.

"Beware, beware," rung in my ears. Too late, too late. I would be where I might beware, in vain.

I will only add, that by midnight the pain of my being had summed up so high that I sauntered out of my room, winding along the dusky hall until I had reached the door behind which reposed the one who had proposed boneset; and then I paused, tapping lowly, and said, sadly and slowly, farewell. And a voice within replied, "Who is there?" "I am going," I said. "Mr. Raven, is it you?' "Yes, madam, I am going; I came to say, 'Good-bye.'"

"O, Mr. Raven! what do you mean?" said she. "Where are you going?" "Back to the world," said I. "What for?" said she. "Because," said I. "O, no!" said she, "you must not go." "My head aches," said I. "O, wait," said she, "and I will get my hartshorn." Alas! she knew not that my own heart shorn was more than enough. "No," said I; "keep such things for your daughter, when I am gone." "Is your poor mother sick?" said she. "No; but one near of kin to her is, and I must go."

"Oh, you dear, dear boy! what ails you! How could you leave us! How could we live without you," &c. I silently thought I would be a *dear*, *dear*, boy to keep in the future.

Then I thought I heard a sobbing from below, and a small voice sadly calling, "Nil, don't go." All terms of endearment were strangely out of place; all my noble sentiments shrunk up and vanished just as a lily wilts. But I must and will pass over that calamitous strip.

CHAPTER XII.

Another thing my grandmother had mentioned was, "hide your bad fortune, consume your own smoke, sew on your own buttons, and always show your best side; for man, like a cloud, is up and down."

Never did the sun shine less significantly than on the next morning; yet there is something in his eye that ever feeds our hope.

Early I began my search for another home, not that I craved a new one, but there is a time to change, and probably mine had come.

Wending into Schermerhorn street, I saw a neat little sign with board on it. I left all to fate (if there is such a thing), and ringing a contiguous door bell, was greeted by a lady of about your mother's age (if she is under fifty), perhaps.

Our words were short but convincing. I asked the price of her board, and she replied without blushing or pausing, $6, from which I inferred that she was a fluent speaker. She asked if I could give reference. I gave her my card the day before I would have scorned any one who could desire a better reference than my presence, but we ain't always the same. Finally I was received, and told her I would be one among her ere she was aware. Returning to my former home, I tried to assume what I had not, a rich look and proud; but I only wore a foreign aspect, for the prop on which my glory rested had been blown into several atoms, and my whole nature had gone into bankruptcy, refusing to pay at sight even a healthy smile or an easy word. I don't believe in deception, but I didn't tell them I should

not leave the city. No, I left them to cherish the idea that I had gone on account of sickness in some vague member of our family.

My love was bitterly crying "Don't go." "Cheer up," I cried, "I shall soon be with you again." She seemed easier, and only sobbed in spots. The mother wept, and looking pained, exclaimed, "Life is a game of sorrows when we least expect it," and I said, *it is*, but let us try it again. Finally, after many expressions of eternal fidelity and various indications of a love that waneth not, we mutually clutched parting hands and left the rest with fate.

As I hurried from the street these touching words were woven in my ear by the breeze; "O, who will take us to the theatre now? Your laugh was so cheery."

CHAPTER XIII.

As a boy blows into a man wondrous quick under favorable breezes, so under bitter winds he is equally quick pinched back to less than his proper size. This was my case. But the idea of my friends knowing it was worst of all. Yet mine proved themselves to be the modestest set I ever met.

They didn't even come near me to hurt my feelings talking about it.

As I had more time to moralize than usual, I mused thus: Young man! keep your force where it can't be stolen by a game; keep it in the head, guarded by the abundant locks of youth.

I know not what impulse took me back to the Exch., unless there is a fascination in gazing on the ruins of what was great—my fortune had been great—perhaps it was only the suggestion of former power.

For a moment I forgot my loss, again my heart beat to the golden harp vibrations of Wall street. My gray-haired adviser coming to me, took my hand and said, "Poor boy, 'tis a hard lesson, but you are too young to be hurt, go to work. You will prosper, but don't come here again." I had no idea of trying another game until I had rested somewhat. I inquired of a friend or so about a small loan, but they didn't know anything about it, and seemed very sorry. I repented having spoken of it, since it made them so sad to refuse; but we get used to our friends' sorrows in our behalf. I longed to burn down the Ex. and write on her charred portals—beware! beware! in honor of my grandmother.

All the day I roamed bedazzled, but not with light, feeling as if I had forsook my calling, or else was coming down with an epidemic. I had thought myself to be possessed of the full number of talents requisite to man's eternal happiness; but all vanished with my cash, and I was sensible of no predominant power in any direction. Only one thing gave me peace, and that was my dress; and I determined then never to wear mean apparel. Adam had little idea, probably, of leaving Eden until he found it necessary, and so with me—I decided rashly, not conscious of the "*threadbare to come.*"

Sadly in the twilight I went to my new home, but not in the path I was wont to travel. I sought another way, leav-

ing Wall street to mingle in the fuller tide of Fulton, where I might pass unseen by any who had known me before.

CHAPTER XIX.

My new home was nice and tidy, and a good dinner exhaled its fragrant breath in my face as I entered; but dinners were no longer a pleasure. I went to the dining-room, but not as I had gone to another nine months before. I didn't offer my arm to the hostess, but slowly followed her. Other young men were there. I bowed to them, and taking a little tea, sought my room, where, flinging myself on the bed, I let my feelings go their own way. I was a boy again, and as sorrowful a combination of atoms as ever had the gift of breath. Soon wild dreams came in to wrangle, saying, you must work and be a clerk. But I cried, I can't be poor, I won't be a clerk.

I also dreamed that I was sitting on the old bridge pier up in sweet Chenango,
On the same old pier
Where I oft had sat and fished in days ago;
Where the bullhead and the unsuspecting perch
Had been called up from their frolic to and fro,
To my tin pail, there to end life's weary search,
If a fish may count it so
And where many an unwary pickerel
Greedy snapping his death warrant in the hook,
Baited pretty to delude his sense of smell,
Was jerked upward to his last account and shook
Desperately senseless.

And where often in the darkest hours of night,
With my tallow candle lantern by my side,
From his wat'ry couch I plucked the slimy eel;
Wriggling like some youthful doctor routed late,
From his night couch where he dreamed of things more great,
To go and see some strange complexity
Of disarrangement
Into which the human fabric is sometimes crowded.

But as I said—

In my dream I was a fising on the pier—
All at once I felt my pole a trembling queer,
And I shouted, "O, it is a mighty bite!"
While I pulled and tugged and struggled with my might;
But the pole bent more and more—I didn't swear—
But I yelled and grabbed a knot-hole in despair
That was in a plank near by, and wildly clung
To my fish pole and that knot-hole, with my tongue
Tween my teeth, alas! it was a blighting tax
On my nervous system. Mercy!
How my constitution shivered,
'While my chords pull, twist and tremble, did wax lax,
And I left the pier at once, I don't know where;
I went like a star dropt senseless thro' the air.

The next thing I knew I heard 'em say, he's dead dead! and then I heard the voice of Kezia weeping a came towards me with that check in her hand. I tri get away, but couldn't because I was dead, and I was of it, for I didn't want to face her.

"This way, gentlemen and ladies; follow me," said K as she led the way to the orchard behind the house stopping under an old sour-apple tree, screamed, "W bury him here."

Oh how I shuddered! as she gnashed her teeth, and scattered the shreds of that check over my lifelessness, and the idea of being laid to rest under that sour-apple tree, whose apples were so bitter that they were always given to the minister for pew rent, made me so mad that in a swell of agony, I roared out, "I ain't dead yet! I ain't dead yet!" and rushed wildly away like a spring calf in search of sour milk.

When I recovered from my dream, I found myself on the floor mixed up with the bed clothes, in a way that made me repent ever having been forced to change my sleeping apartments.

CHAPTER XV.

Next day, my gray friend in Wall Street, seeing me, approached, saying, "I have found you a place in an iron broker's office, which you can take at once, if you like." Then my heart leaped. Then my soul began to revel, but it reveled only once; for he added, "at $7 per week."

Misery and desolation flew back, and perching on either shoulder, put their vile beaks to my ears, and shouted, $7 a week, ha, ha!

Must I, who had made thousands without a thought, sell my proud soul in strips at the rate of $7 per week? Never! I have heard of men, who, having no natural inclination for monkey, have learned to eat it, and thus I entered that office. And what is an iron broker, you may ask. Well, he sells iron of all kinds, from crude pig to the polished and

attractive steel rail, cars, etc., and works for his living generally.

I had not been there a week before I found out that I was'nt dealing in stocks, and that iron was a hard thing for promoting existence. When on Saturday night I received $7, it seemed as if I had reached the supreme insignificance of things.

I could have fought, wept, or thrown it away, but I kept it. Only a few days before I had spent as much for a silk handkerchief. O doleful night of Saturday. It is awful at any time of life to be suddenly switched off from a smooth course, and bump, bump, and drag along a cold and foreign soil.

I am sorry now that I had so much bother, and that I let sorrow perch so heavily on my heart. If I were to live again, I would give up all trouble and have a good time. Life is too short for woe.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sunday came, and with it the flashing panorama of all my former Sundays in the city—now so no more. No longer could I go to the church, where only a month before I had given $100 for a seat.

The morning was beautiful; the birds were singing, and balmy peace seemed hovering over all but me.

Dressing myself in my best, I went into the street, and, having no end in view, carelessly sauntered along, minding not whither I went. But as I wound along with the streets,

gradually the sweet influence of the old Chenango Sundays floated through my sense, of those Sunday mornings when the clear bells rang rest to all the weary, as they wended to the church.

In this mood I had wandered away from the city's center, and seeing a neat brick church in the suburbs a little before me, I entered. A very pleasant gentleman offered to give me a seat, and at my request, I sat in a rear pew. It seemed as if all turned to glance at me. It may have been but a quick fancy. The minister read, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." But it only made me more bitter towards my second cousin.

Then "Rock of Ages" floated soft and deliciously soothing over my weary soul, and for a little, memory of my sadness slept, only to waken at "Put not your trust in princes, or in the sons of men;" while an echo in my heart sighed, "Amen."

The text was: "And what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world," etc. But I didn't feel like moralizing, thinking "most anything better than losing all you ever had." Mad tears rolled up and down my cheek. Some old ladies looked dreadfully pleased at the effect of the sermon on me.

I heard one whispering, "It takes Mr. Kulp to hit these flashy young sinners. Just look at those two eyes,—will you."

My greatest woe was *really* a lack of Caroline, my love, who even then might be grieving, thinking me far away. It took all my energy to keep my body where it belonged, and I was in constant terror lest it should get the start of

me and run lustily through the streets, shouting "Caroline!" But the epigrammatic fragment, $7 per week, acted like a linked charm, chaining me to my new orbit. And then I cried, O, Caroline, I'll write a line to thee, O, lovely Caroline! And hurrying to my room I communed. I wish I had saved a copy of the letter to look at occasionally, for I have changed since I wrote it. I will tell you what I remember—

Caroline, O mine!
O, my lovely darling.

My heart goes queer and heavy, and I am lone. I can't sleep much; I don't want to sleep; I only want to think of you. I hate everybody else. I wish I had some of your curls.

One glitter of your eye would make me happy for life. Love is life, ain't it, Caroline? If you don't love me I am dead. I don't want to live when I die; I mean when you don't love me. O mighty primrose, why do we live? But *do* we live? No, no, not when apart. My breath goes fast, I want to hold your hand. I would be happy with one finger. My friends say "you look sick." I say "it is climate," meaning you. The only climate I like is where you are. The birds of Iceland would sing if you should go there to visit your friends. Why must I write such foolish black marks, when my fingers ache to count the fringes on your bow. O nightingale! Cuckoo! Dove! what is like to thee! I look around my room, bleak as an ice-house, because you ain't in it. O when shall we be one? But now my head grows thick, and I am sick. The love words stick and won't come quick. My breath is hot and dry, and not peaceful.

I pine, I pine,
O Caroline,
For you.

I groan, I groan,
My own, my own,
Adieu!

My body aches,
My heart it breaks,
It does, it does.

I sob, I sob,
And feel like Job,
That painful man of Uz.

O Caroline,
Come and be mine,
O bitterly.

I cry and sigh,
Good bye, good bye,
My Caroline!

Proudly I sealed my first *love letter*.
Do you ask how I sent it so she wouldn't know I was in
e city? Well, I inclosed the whole thing in another en-
lope, and sent it to a comrade in Chenango, with these
rds:

DEAR GEO.—Will you please drop inclosed letter in your
st office? They are changing ours, and as it is an impor-
nt missive, I was afraid to entrust it anywhere but you.
P. S.—I am well and happy. Ever yours, NIL.

Next day, as I sat in the gloom of Wall street, inquiring

of myself if it were not better not to be, and all that, in burst that spontaneous outgrowth of civilization in his gray uniform, calling my name. O, joyous instant! O, Caroline! But he gave me two letters. Wild at this unforseen, but duplex joy, hungrily I tore the paper between me and my Caroline's soul, and drank.

"O, Nil! why did you go? O, Nil! when will you come? O, you can never know how sick and sad I am! I sighed and cried at first when you were gone. I don't stand any more a-looking out the door or window every night, waiting for you to come. Mamma tells me my hair and collar ain't so nice since you went. I don't care. Mr. Carlisle tries to look tender at me, but I wouldn't have him, if you were a million miles away. I don't hum any more, nor play. I am too full of sad. Is your friend better? O, hire the best doctor, and make him get well, and do come back. I miss going to the theatre; I mean I miss you. Mr. Carlisle tried to come home with me from church last Sunday night, but he didn't; so you see how true I am. I don't believe he is rich at all. I think he came here just to get in good society; but he won't get in mine. He can't make money as you can and ain't anything beside you. Mamma sends lots of love. She misses you so much, and wants you to hurry back. O, hurry, hurry! "CAROLINE."

Well, that was soothing, I must confess. Nil come back —at $7 per week—

O, sorrow! what is thy thickness? *I must, I will, I shall* be rich.

I looked at the other envelope. It was directed in a trembling hand, and seemed strangely familiar. I had no desire to open it. Finally, I tore it open, and read:

"MY NOBLE NIL:—Your letter just come, and I was

o'er-shocked at your awful goodness in sending me that valuable bit of paper; but I don't know how to use it, and have locked it up in that little tin trunk of yours till you come. O, can't you come soon? I am having your room all fixed up so fine, but my fingers ain't used to writing. I knew you was full of good blood.

"Your thankful "KEZIA."

I could have embraced her for her genius in locking up the check. Then the beauties of ignorance rose before me, "Oh, I shall be rich again before she finds out that it ain't good," was my song. I was very young.

CHAPTER XVII.

As I am a descendant of "*Anneke Jans*," I had thought of getting a lot in Trinity churchyard, for the purpose of placing some of my friends there, who had been unable to leave home while living. It was with pride that I conceived how zealously would burn the souls of some I had known—could they have foreseen their last earthly resting-place—to be 'neath the granite shadow of old Trinity.

Being the direct descendant of the aforesaid, I was entitled to as much land in and around Trinity as I could get, but I am glad I did not put in a claim for a lot there. I would not wish to die if I was buried there. No, I would rather go to a foreign spot, and live with its natives forever. I may be hard to suit, but wouldn't lie in anything, much less in Trinity. I don't want to sleep where folks can come and point out to their friends the evidence of my defeat,

saying, "There lies Nil Raven, for awhile successful; he finally failed, poor Nil." No, I don't want sympathy; I would rather joke.

CHAPTER XVIII.

For the few following days I felt glorious in my sense of Caroline and in my consciousness of Kezia's ignorance. How long this condition might have lasted under other circumstances, I can't tell. A few days more brought me another missive from my gem. Ah! how beautiful is love. Flutteringly I divided the envelope, sighing at the diminutive and comfortless size of the paper, and read this touching scrap:

"MR. RAVEN—My mother says I am young, and thinks I had better not correspond with gentlemen. This is all she will let me say. "CAROLINE."

O Heavens and blindness! where am I! and what for! Oh, this new and periodical burden will divest me of all peace! O Fate! why do you hate me so? The tenderest sting of my being had been triflingly pulled out of place, and was gushing with discord. Thick with excitement, I ran round the office, crying, "Her mother has been meddling with my Caroline. She has heard of my disaster, and now seeks to infect her daughter. Oh, I see through it." Severely the ends of my coat I clutched, and didn't go home till late. I hurried by, feeling a strong impulse to lose trace of myself. As I neared the fountain by Prospect Park, I thought I saw the statue of Lincoln waving his hand, as if wanting to speak with me. I went and sat on his granite footstool.

Life was a burden, and feeling very hard toward the world, I strove mightily to petrify. Then, for the sake of posterity, I tried to look calmer. In my agony, again the statue seemed restless. Glancing upward, I saw a benign smile spreading over his placid features, and heard—and that reminds me of a story—and I laughed in spite of myself, and again I was saved.

CHAPTER XIX.

Six months in an iron broker's office at $7 a week had not made a man of me. I had secretly hoped to see how the business was done, in order to get away as much as possible from my employer, but he was wily, he was what might be called knowing, and the smartest broker on the street. But I never could get any more idea what he was about than if he had been my grandfather. He would plunge out and seek his game and bring it in, but never let me know his hunting ground. He had a natural scent for game, and could smell an iron buyer across the Continent. From New York to California, and thence to Texas pointed his keen olfactories, and they never deceived him. He always brought home his quarry, and as the Indian hunter drags a deer into his wigwam, requesting his squaw to fix it, so he would rush in and fling at my feet his iron orders, which I could pick up and enter in the sales-book at leisure. I believe his faculty was a gift, for we were not alike.

As I said, I had been with him six months, when one

morning he blandly said, "Things are dull, and I am sorry, but shall have to find a boy at $5 a week." If you ever met a strange bear, you will know about how I felt at this news, but as I was bound not to go back to Chenango till I could watch corn grow without hoeing it, I staid. Five dollars a week stared me in the face, and I told my landlady I must go.

To this she looked opposed, and said it must not be.

To which I responded that, owing to business arrangements it would be necessary for me to depart, but that I would keep my room and sleep there if she wished.

Then she looked truly puzzled as if her reason "was out."

Finally she proposed keeping me for $4.50 per week, if I would room with her two darling boys. This was too much; I told her I had stayed. Thus, you see, my incidental expenses would necessarily be limited to 50 cents per week—enough for a bunch of ferry tickets, a bunch of toothpicks and a bunch of wild flowers. My main diet for the next twelve hours after her concession was in the form of advertisements, but there was not much nurture there. Such things don't amount to much in times of war—they are only good in peace; the most favorable were such as "Boy wanted to tend bar," and "A small but respectable young man who can't read, for coachman," "Industrious boy to guard a henroost," etc.

I noticed no particular change after I had decided to keep my boarding-place, until bed-time, and then I entered a new field of experience. I had hitherto been alone in the world, and my bed had never been shared by friend or foe. Now, all at once it was usurped by two reckless puffers, whose

limbs were wrangling with the elements. It was mournful to see them thus, but I was so tired that I didn't stop to moralize. Looking in vain for some spot among them where I might sink in peace or in pieces, I stirred them up, but only made them whine and growl. Finally rolling them together as well as possible on one side, I tried to calm myself; but it was of no use. Like ripe grain in the hands of a master flailer, I was threshed; groaning at the chafing until, driven to the end of my patience, I sprang up, and seizing the pillows and part of the covering, sought another level—the floor—too level for comfort—and earnestly courted repose, but she came not.

Those swaying chunks of animated clay were only cradles of mighty breezes. The north winds were pouring boisterously through their robust nostrils. Then I wished they had been twins so that they might breathe together; but not so, they alternated, so that one continuous stream of tempestuous sonorosity flooded me with nocturnal agony, until by energetic application with the pillows in my ears, I glided into a superstitious dose, till the rattling of falling tears told me the storm had not abated, for coldness had pinched them and they were wailing. This was too much. The moon shone coldly in, and by its light I replaced the stolen warmth, and, dressing myself in blankets that I found in the closet, went to the window and gazed on things without. It was then that I longed for influence. It was then, if ever, that I would have been willing to be in the little bed I had left in Chenango. O! how zealously I would have greeted the once obnoxious morning song of my relative, "Up, up, and fetch the cows—," could it but swell and

drown the young but well-developed thunders around me. Then the "pleasures of hope" came bell-like into my soul at the recollection of a snoring recipe which I had heard as a boy, told by an old lady who was visiting Kezia.

Eagerly had I listened while she grew warm over the memories of those long-past nights wherein she had cured her vigorous family of nine boys and seven girls of snoring, or "snorting," as she called it.

Many years had her method lain dormant, in me. Suddenly it awoke to comfort.

It was a simple recipe, viz., to grasp the nose with thumb and finger and hold on, thereby forcing the breath through the mouth, which being larger than the nose, was less likely to disturb. For an instant I meditated, till a picture of that old lady stealing out of her bed in the noisy hours of night, and visiting each individual couch in order to administer her harmless recipe, nerved me to my duty.

My first step was to step on the bed and separate them (they slept together) far enough to get between them and apply my plan. Cautiously I felt around the noses to get their dimensions. I never shall forget the feeling as I softly put down my thumb and finger preparatory to grasping. They were distended, feeling much like polished ivory tubes. Then gathering them together in a decided way, I strove to woo the thunders from their wonted course, while the wriggling and the kicking of the boys as they swelled and turned red in the face were the only signs of inward confusion, till a terrible gust of wind burst through the labial gate with a fearful snapping just as a swollen river breaks through a dam, sounding like a tea kettle, half full of boiling water, with its

nose corked up for convenience, while it madly puffs, sputters, and rattles away at the cover. There was an earnest bubbling within; chattering teeth, etc., only made the thing more real.

Finally, my aching fingers relaxed; likewise the noses. Again I was dazed, till the still moon, cautiously treading her spacious chamber, cast a lunatic smile through my window pane, which finally burst out laughing on the glass stopper-cork of a bottle, whose contents had hitherto been unquestioned by me. But something seemed whispering "Rest at last." Time, which brings all things together, did so with me and the bottle. Uncorking it, a revelation was dancing in my brain and happy tears poured forth their gratitude. It was hartshorn. Relief had come. Impetuously I seized a piece of cotton that had gone to seed in my pocket, and clasping my hands in silent ecstacy, whispered "At last."

Sharpening the handles of two spent matches, I fixed a piece of cotton on the end of each, and saturated them with the liquid. I went to the bedside (the moon was laughing in the faces of her rivals), and watching my chance, thrust quick—but sure.

The thunder stopped; the moon went on; the house awoke, and I wished that I knew of some place for silent communion with a friend. Hurrying feet came to the door and knocked, but their owner waited not for an answer, as there were indications of life within. Looking around, I saw part of a nocturnal cap protruding through, and heard, "What on earth is the matter with my darlings?" Then the wailing grew louder. There was wrestling

among the pillows and unministerial snorts, suggestive of increasing disorder, and I cried, "They have the night-mare, they ate too much corn and pudding. I knew they would. I didn't know what to do, but I think they are better now." Then the enraged cubs howled, "It ain't the night-mare neither; it's my nose, O! O!" Then she began searching their noses, but thank Fate! Their agitation and her sense of smell, touch, and sight, saved me from an early grave.

The night passed. I am glad that it *has* passed, and if it was going to pass my way again, I would spend the rest of my life in going 'round it. As I don't care to bring up this subject again, I will tell you a few more experiences with the boys, and then leave them to the judgment to come. Next day I was hollow-eyed, but the day was not hallowed. The only bright spot in it was when passing a notion stand, my eyes saw what sent a palpitating delight through the remainder of my being. I know not what influence, spiritual, Satanic, or ornamental, aided me, but it seemed as if the only æsthetic want of my nature suddenly assumed a palpable shape before me, in the form of a clothes-pin of a wiry character—*i. e.*, a wire coil between two strips of wood. But I can't explain it better than "pinch one end and snap went the other." I bought two of these.

When I entered my home that night, I had an air of general revival about me. I was more as I was earlier in life. The boys carefully eyed me, and it was only my most bland smile and words that quieted their suspicion of me as the cause of their nasal pangs, and otherwise cloudy experience of the previous night; I asked them if they were any

better of the night-mare, but they only scowled. As soon as I had dined I left the house, being too full of mirth, which was the natural result of my scheme. Bed-time at last came, and I sought my couch where all was full of life. Sleeping activity more impressive than the most hilarious wakefulness, beat against my displeased sense of order. Then again, after arranging my pins (my wiry pins) on a stand near the bed, I threw myself among them for quiet. But well I knew the diet of the boys was not conducive to such things. Still they did not snore, but tumbled and writhed promiscuously, till again I was driven away mad, because they were not sonorous. Again I went to the window to see if the moon would bring relief. They sounded much as a steam-engine, dispersing steam, and horribly restless. Then I wandered to the stand where the hartshorn had set the night before, thinking, perhaps, I might find something to calm their excitement. Among other things, I saw a little box of pellets, labeled "Dr. Pierce's sugar-coated pills. Warranted to cure everything. Sedative pills."

Sedative—happy word—a peaceful sensation again possessed me, for I whispered they can't do any hurt, they are so small and sweet, and may be the means of much improvement. If your folks ever had a white horse, and you ever thought to pe off a little of his horse-hair, you will have noticed that he wasn't any whiter within than other horses.

That was the case with these pills. They were not fair to view within. But this was the fault of the maker, and on him may the calamity rest. In full trust of his sagacity,

I selected six of his bead-like combinations, and arranged them into threes, and again read the directions. I hardly knew on which plea to administer them, until once more I read "Sedative pills." Then, fully convinced of their merits, I stood over my patients, waiting for a chance to scatter the seeds of kindness within. Then the bell of the City Hall began its midnight tale, and while it told it the old house-clock joined in a salubrious chorus, and by a sly motion the cunning pellets were stowed away under their puerile tongues. But let us pause.

It may be that my talent for physic is poor, or it may be that Dr. Pierce is a fraud, or was out of his mind when he made that bottle of pellets. I will only say that I was disappointed. Half an instant breathless, I looked to see them sink sweetly to quiet. I will here remark that it would pain me if my hope of immortality should be as utterly blasted as was my hope of success on that occasion—for there was a change. The boyish faces assumed new proportions, working in weird fantastic shapes, as if they had been eating green apples in their sleep, or had been bitten by a neighbor's cat. Then a series of the wildest and most unlooked-for contortions squirmed o'er their puzzled features, and small but bitter grunts rose to the surface. There was curling and wrangling and stretching of limbs in frightful measures.

Bristling horror pierced me. I quaked, thinking they might be poisoned, but couldn't stop 'em. Worse and worse grew their raging; increasing agony raised them in their sleep, and then for three minutes things were odd. Excuse me if I seem vulgar but what I tell is true—snorting, weep-

ing, howling, spitting, etc., shook the house. It was the most spitful group I ever saw, in every direction. And there was fierce clutching of white sheets, which were crowded in their suddenly obnoxious palatial crevices, and deep burying of heads in pillows. But all was useless. O, what a night-mare was that! Then the youthful tangling became intense. They were as one in their affliction. Face to face like two ferocious cubs they fought, pulling hair and blowing salivated perplexity with the energy of unmitigated despair, and yelling like wild cats frantic with emotion. I would not live through another such scene for anybody, unless it was to save a neighbor's baby from croup. "Oh, what have I done?" But I had no time to moralize. Like a mighty wind something was on its way to us. Heavens! How I grasped a blanket, and fell to the floor asleep, just as an excited article rushed in among us, crying, "My darlings, my darlings, what new devil is this!" And it would freeze any mother's heart, such mad caressing among her darlings. She flung her arms about them, but they only pulled her hair and spat. She screamed, and I awoke, saying "Help! help!" Then she, struggling, said, "*For Heaven's sake keep still.*" And I obeyed, asking her if they often acted as queer. "Queer," she cried, "they never had a word together, much less fighting nights, till you came and slept with them."

Then the boys shouted:

"My mouth! O, my nasty, nasty mouth!"

"Where are their mouths?" loudly she demanded.

"I guess they are around," I said. "They woke me up, fighting and grunting."

After a while, by the aid of water and rags their mouths were arranged, and only an occasional puff told of a spent tempest. Suspiciously the mother left them. I encouraged her, saying that probably their gastric juice had scoured on 'em, but told her not to worry, as folks always recovered and made better men after such attacks.

Perplexedly she looked, and said she couldn't see any reason for such actions, as she had brought up her boys to leave each other alone. Gradually she left. I breathed freer.

The boys slept, but their mouths were severely puckered and their lips drawn tight, as if determined not to be trifled with again. Again their noses vibrated, and desperately I cried:

"These things cannot last. They will wear me out. I must—O, I must sleep just once before I leave this accursed spot forever."

I leaned back in a chair, but it was useless. Frantic, I seized my clothes-pins, and with clenched teeth went and stood over the nose of my boys.

Jealously but carefully snapping them on, bound to change that boisterous wind, and force it through those wronged mouths or die. Ha! ha! It was amusing to see 'em strive for a sniff, while their cramped cheeks puffing up and distended till white and glassy, told of the struggle within. But the mouth wouldn't give. Bigger and bigger they swelled. I got scared, and knew not how to act. I didn't dare take or knock the pins off, lest the terrible pressure of air, suddenly freed, would blow the nose to pieces. Yet something must be done, I cried, and shutting my eyes,

struck their shiny cheeks with the palms of my hand. Their lips flew asunder, and the gale tore through the house. Quickly I snatched the pins, and their mouth flew together with a report like a pop-gun, but they did not waken. I imagined I heard a noise below, as if somebody was hanging around the crack of a door to listen. I said *imagined*, for all reality was drowned in the nasal bustle, until I grew so tormented that a large drop of cold sweat fell from my nose to my thumb. In our family this was always a bad sign.

There was a wardrobe in the room, which might have seen centuries. I examined it, and pulling out two of the lower drawers, arranged them for sleeping apartments, putting in papers and other utensils, sponges, corks, etc. Then I seized the first boy and softly bore him to his place. The drawer was too short, but by considerable curling I got him in; likewise the second, and then things sounded very much like a rhinoceros in a cave; I was sorry I hadn't died before. Savagely I grasped the pins, and tumultuously rushing toward them, snapped them carefully on their proboscces, and for once wished man's nose had been put on, out of reach of his hand. I would rather skip the rest. My system was in that condition, where it had to rest or give up. For an instant all was silent, and I slept. How long I know not. Why did I ever wake! It seemed as if I were shaken to pieces in my dreams. "Where are my boys? Where are my boys?" was shouted in my ears, and again my blood curdled in terror. The mother, evidently suspecting something was wrong had remained wakeful, and was probably attracted by the sudden suspension of her sons'

clamorous breath. I don't know how I was helped, but I hurriedly exclaimed, "They have gone for something to eat." Fate stepped in to help me. "Horrors!" she said, and was plunging out of the door when something cracked, and an enraged howl from her darling smote her ears. She, thinking he had broken a dish, leaped down the stairs, repeating Scripture, but in her haste some of her night apparel got tangled in the hat-rack, and she, judging from her appearance, as manifested through her voice, was wracked with woe. But, let her go. Women who wander witless at night should suffer. "Help! help! help! You brute, let me go!" she cried. She thought some one was robbing her, perhaps. The whole house was roused. Matches were struck and hurrying feet ran to arrange the hat-rack. I leaped to the drawers and tugged, but they yielded not, catching at each end, and the most terrific yelling my ears ever experienced floated up from within. I was completely discomposed, and whispered to them, "Keep still; it's only a joke." But they, as guileless as a fool, didn't seem to understand it. If you were ever in a neighbor's hen-roost between the hours of 12 and 1 A. M., you will probably recollect your feelings. They were just like mine. Crowing and cackling are always mortifying, especially when we least expect it. I have never been in a hen-roost.

But the curtain must fall. I had quickly dressed myself, and taking a small satchel in which I kept all I had of my account (I didn't have much), I dropped it out of the window in the small yard, and hurried to see what the matter was below. I tried to be calm and act natural, but seized a hat.

"Where are my boys?" the mother cried.

"They are all right," I said, "up stairs, and I came down to see if you have hurt yourself."

"Hurt yourself?" she exclaimed. "If it hadn't been for the rack I should probably have been dead before this. I was going so fast I couldn't stop."

I was near the door, and opening it, said, "I am going to take a look at the weather;" and in her mind, I am still looking that way.

How she and the boys took my departure I never had the curiosity to inquire; but as for me, I would rather be left a stranger on a cannibal oasis than under her roof again.

CHAPTER XX.

And now comes grim economy to vex—
That stern deliv'rer in the time of wrecks.

Finding a room whose chief dimension was toward the stars, I made my abode therein.

Seeing a book in the office entitled "Hand-Book of Political Economy," I read it through, and made up my mind that I would rather starve than to run the risk of getting any help there.

I bought various cheap little books—pamphlets and other historical works—whose aim was to teach a man how to live well on ten cents a day, and began at once to experiment that way.

One night while passing City Hall, in Brooklyn, just as the clock struck nine, I made a vow. Yes, just as old Time'

iron knuckles knocked nine more pickets off the fence of life, I vowed that I would live a week at the rate of ten cents a day, or else seek some office in a foreign missionary society.

Eager in my purpose, I performed my vow through the medium of soup. Yes, I lived on soup and water a week. And as I passed that same City Hall, at the expiration of just a week—to a minute, I made another vow, viz.: that, if possible, I never would vow again. O, it was the weakest week of my life.

I know not the mystic properties of New York soup, but would remark, that as a means of subsistence it is contrary to the pre-established principles of my being.

My stomach became very uneasy, and sent up word, "As you hope for immortality, stop flooding me with such streams of nonsense; I shall reject them in the future."

And on that last night of the week there was much confusion in the gastronomical system—much as if two planets had got loose, and, rushing together, had disarranged the Gulf Stream. At any rate, something was wrong, and my week had been spent in vain, for man cannot live on fluid alone.

The next week was supported on pie. In one sense it was a real pious week; in another, I concluded that such things can't satisfy man's immortal state, or appease the restless stomach of youth.

Oh, it is awful to find yourself in a place where your worst enemy is your own stomach. If you don't feed it, it will eat you. "The world is controlled by stomachs," some one has said. I would only observe that it hasn't been so in my case.

CHAPTER XXI.

One day as I sat in the restaurant reflecting, wishing I was a chunk of ice, so I could melt and float away, the various commingling odors so affected me that I was afraid I might lose control over myself. It was then, in my conflict, that I wrote these lines, which were the turning-point in my course.

Old farm scenes came in to greet me. I just let my pencil have its own way. I can't explain it, unless some are born to greatness.

Oh for a piece of hot corn bread,
  Of chicken pie and crispy pork,
Oh, could I feed as once I fed
(O heavens! I wish that I was dead)
On chicken pie and hot corn bread.
  Oh, I would die of overwork.
I'd trade my heart for a codfish ball,
  For a bowl of milk, a big blue bowl,
With a big lead spoon and a small lead hole
  In the end of the spoon, and some hasty pud-
Ding Kezia had made, and all
  The other things she used to make,
The things that were so awful good,
  The red dried beef and the hot pancake,
The steaming pink-eyed pot-a-to,

Apple-sauce and the brown doughnut,
The ginger-snap and the pickle, too;
Mince pie crammed with raisins; but
The old taste comes and makes me mad
To think of the Dutch cheese I once had,
I'd give my fleece
For a little piece.
Oh could I feed as once I fed
(O heavens! I wish that I was dead)
On chicken pie and hot corn bread.

I was all overcome, and cried, "Genius must be fed;" and rousing the waiter, ordered a lavish meal, until I vowed I wouldn't go near a restaurant again unless I could control myself better. I also pledged myself with a glass of ice-water not to marry then. It was the proudest minute in my life when I hugged the paper with those few sublime words that I had just written. Lovingly I looked on the pencil and shaved off a shaving and swallowed it, in honor of it. Looking down at the hand that held the pencil, I cried, "Dear hand!" and bit my finger-nail. In my zeal I thought that perhaps I might be persuaded to marry somebody for money. I had generally been more particular on those points, but in this frame of mind I looked through the papers to see if I could get any clue to anything. But the only thing that seemed at all applicable was, viz.: "Wanted, an ignorant but lively boy, to help me fish, for which he shall have all the comforts of life, in proportion as he fishes."

Next morning, feeling much better, I tried to hold a confidential talk with my employer, asking him if he cared if I went in as partner with him. I never saw a man look

stranger. He only said he couldn't see the use of it. He never was as sharp on some points as I was, but as he was not talkative, we dropped the subject. I solaced myself by muttering, "All right, Old Evil, it will be my turn yet." The thing that puzzled me was, what Adam would have done in my place. Would he surmount the difficulties and force his employer to accept him, or would he leave. I had come to that state where most anything was better than existence. It was in these moments of despair that I longed for another climate. Then I determined to launch myself out on the world as a traveler, and to adopt literature as a profession. The words I had put together the night before made me wild for more. "At last I have found a meaning to life—at last I am saved!" was my cry.

CHAPTER XXII.

All the members of my family had been more or less literary. My grandfather had been quite so, in his way. He made a good many notes, and they always sold well, and everything seemed pointing to me as the one to keep the spark glowing.

"Poetry shall be my aim. I will shake the world and warn young men to beware," I cried. Oh! it was restful to find my true forte. Now I should be great. Now I should have fame. Oh, how delightful was I, when, lying down at night, my room seemed reaching to the clouds, and voices sung—"Soon, ah soon, will you rise and shine. The world shall hear you." No sleep would come. My soul

was full of new music. I seized a pencil and a small piece of paper. I was so full that I couldn't think of anything to say—then something said—"Write on the first thing you see," and my old hat was near me. The way words rushed over my paper was wonderful. It was touching, and inclined toward pathos—I mean the poem. I almost wept when the last stroke fell. I knew I must keep still about it, and not show my feeling in my face, else all the reporters would try to get it, and worry and tease me to tell how I wrote it. The idea of questioning genius! I will give you the first scene:

OLD HAT.

Old hat! you once was new,
As new as anything
I ever knew, but you
Have seen much suffering.

'T was you who covered up
My head when it was mad
Because the world eat up
All of the things I had.

You kept my aching brain
Hid from the world without,
They couldn't see the pain,
Nor what it was about.

There were seventeen scenes, perfectly tantalizing, ending thus:

My cash is all gone,
My coat is all worn,
And so are my pants—
My features are wan—
O, why was I born?
Is an argument I sometimes advance.

Glowing to send these beautiful words, I hurriedly sought my office next morning and wrote my first letter to a New York editor, whose name modesty compels me not to reveal, lest he be embarrassed:

"MR. ———: *Dear Sir*—I don't suppose you know me, but I don't care; I always feel familiar with great men and editors. I had a little trouble with a country editor once. He said things that didn't agree with me. As he was rather over-sized and advanced in years, I let him alone, but told his father, who flogged him, ever since which we have been very intimate. As my main object in life is to live in the quickest and best way, I have decided to be literary; and as I have heard so much about you, I will send you my first poem. (Isn't it cute, though?)

"I also have many things to tell you which I will save till our next. You will see ere this where my talent lies. It has surprised me to see how I can put words together. I just seem to let the pen have its own way, but it never disappoints me, and when I look at the result I always find that I am on some other subject which suits me better than what I began on. I have heard of some folks who were from two weeks to ten years in writing a few worthless lines. But it didn't take me fifteen minutes to do what I send you, so I feel that I ought to write for you regardless of cost. You will notice, if you are careful, that I can be grave and amusing, in the same breath, which I can say of nobody. These qualities are all one needs for success in literature, I have heard.

"I am dying for action; can you give me some? I have seven jokes that will keep till next week, which will adorn and rectify your otherwise incipient sheet. I also have a gift at touching up old subjects in a new way, and have just finished a fancy sketch on Methuselah, so fresh and vigorous that you never could guess who it was without help. After I have written for you a little, I would like to call on your family, as I always desire to be intimate with anybody I like. I am not married. I only say this because I would rather not deceive you and yours, as it is often hard to treat a young man courteously lest his wife should be hurt.

"P. S. You may have my 'Old Hat' half price, since I am new to you; also please send me your picture if you

have an old one to spare, as I am collecting curiosities for a private art gallery.

"Yours in love,

"NIL RAVEN."

Oh! what a languid, happy breath I drew when it was done and sent. Now let come adversity, care, and sorrow. My new hope was life enough. I was loth to go home that night till I had received an answer, and then I grew puzzled about what to wear if he should want me to come and dine with his folks right away. I determined to use my poem money, which he would soon send, in adorning myself. For, I reasoned, who knows? I may form some partnership there, since love cometh unsought.

CHAPTER XXIII.

In my haste to get the letter next morning, I neglected my meal (experience now says, "Never leave a good thing for a better unless you are sure of it"), and was at the office first by several hours; zealously I scanned the features of every advancing carrier, blessing them all, and feeling like dividing part of my poem money with them; but as each succeeding postman tripped by, I only cursed their deceitful looks, exclaiming, "Oh, they are a vain thing for safety." My rage increased in splendor.

I remained in this condition a week. The only thing to console me was that they were fixing up a day to receive me, and that perhaps his daughter might be away from home.

My writing had made me very proud. I suppose I felt

much as a gardener would feel in finding jewels for the first time, in his back yard. I began to scorn all men except New York editors. All were so far below me in genius. That week my life was made up of crackers and apples. I was anxious to save a little of my wages for spending money. I would here remark on crackers, as I never care to allude to them again, that as a means of oyster soup, or in times of great excitement on the railroad, or as a way of amusing children and old men with cheese, or in sudden cases of forced domestic economy, the cracker has no equal among men. But as a means of success in any great undertaking, as in fitting up an orphan for politics, or a young man for the ministry, or a lawyer for another state of existence, they are useless, and no lover, sue he ever so truly, can convince anybody of a love that dieth not on crackers. I will only add that Mr. Darwin's "Survival of the fittest" could not have done so on crackers, and then the world would have been deprived of the best joke ever cracked on its senseless head.

But a word on apples, and I will pass. I ate three measures that week, and I must confess I never felt as much ashamed of anybody as then, and thought it served my relatives right to be driven out of the garden where all they had to do was to enjoy themselves, and take their pick out of all the fruits of the earth, except the ignorant apple. Work was the only safe thing with people of such a ruinous taste. It was well that they escaped so easily. Oh! if I had been Adam, and as fond of Eve as I am now, and Adam had occurred in my place, wouldn't he have had a better time? Wall street would not have taken place. The world

would have needed no history, and Eve and I to-day would be sauntering around Eden, surrounded by our little group. But I can't go any further. It wildens me, for it so much reminds me of the old sketch, "It might have been."

But Adam is dead, and Eve has fallen about him, and man is in darkness.

I will only say that as an experiment I succeeded, and decided that with the exception of apple dumpling, perhaps, the true use of the apple was pleasantly illustrated by Ike Newton in discovering his gravity. I have no doubt that the gravity of the universe in general was much shocked by that careless apple. He discovered universal attraction, and I the law of gastronomic contraction. But I must cease indulging in these majestic principles lest somebody feel slighted.

Never had I enjoyed such intense dilapidation, in every way, both physically and ornamentally. My ball of hope, very big early in the week, had been unwinding at a dangerous rate, until it seemed vanishing forever. I tried to hold on to it in vain. Gladly would I have gone to the editor's funeral, had there been any chance. It would have been the best fun of my life. It was Saturday, towards night. I was worse, and felt that I must have relief or a letter. Grasping the pen, I let my soul loose in behalf of the painful man. Madness mingled in its flow, and right words came not to my aid. Thus my pen pranced: "What! you slumbrous, grumous-pated, hydrocephalistic mummy—come, you wrinkled fragment of imbricated brutality, are you all dead or simply imbecile? Or what is the matter, you ignorant cub of a sneezing puzzle, why have you acted

so?" But my pen would go no further, push as I would. I read what it had written, and concluded it wouldn't do, and that he might be sick. In which case he might not want me to write for him any longer, unless I could hide my feelings better. Then I thought of writing to his wife, to see if he was at home, or if she knew anything about my poem. But not being able to find where she lived, I confined my letter to her husband again.

"DEAR SIR—George Washington would have answered me before, therefore I infer you ain't Geo. Washington. Neither would Ben. Franklin have neglected me so long, for he discovered lightning and had to be quick about it. If you don't answer me, I shall think you are going to forsake me, and I would rather *death* should come between us than that. Yes, I would rather see you lying speechless and gone, than to have you give me up. If you want to know who I am, why don't you say so? I may die if you don't stop your fooling and hurry up. Where I came from it matters little. Where I go to, matters more, and I call on you to answer that question, for a change has come over me and changed me. It may, perhaps, be the symptoms of an early death from neglect. I don't want to deprave, but we ruin easy in our family when we get ageing. I ain't ready for immortality yet, till my poem is accepted. Have you a son? If so, you will understand me when I say, 'May he come to soup if you don't reply.' "NIL RAVEN."

I sent it, and with an aching head went home. I couldn't do anything but embrace my calling when I had reached my room, and wrote with fury. Pictures, past, present, and future, were rushing and tumbling in my head; so all I had to do was to hold any one of them still a minute and write it down. Blood-curdling signs, like "Quail on toast," flashed before me, and left a black mark on the paper, just as

a flash of lightning blackens a pine stump. This was first combination. Yes, quail on, thou toast, and may ever quail as I am quailing now. Then my pen got the ter of me, thus:

Can the musk-rat change his tail?
Or his pace the kangaroo?
Can a star-fish eat a whale?
Or a bee a cockatoo?
Neither can I dine on "quai
On toast" now. Adieu, a

Then my fancy turned to former things, thus:

Dark Eve she bit
The apple. It
Then by Adam was bitten,
Just as a cat
First tastes a rat,
And after her the kitten.

But the pictures would chase each other so quick th could devote only an instant to each, occasionally throwin a title to show when one subject was exhausted, and anot begun:

O life! you queer, queer thing,
Where is thy sting?
Why should we lie awake
With stomach ache?
If I should die
Just now,
Where would I go?
At it I sigh,
I swow *
I do not know.

* * * * * *

Out of an old purr cat
He made a new fur hat
And a fiddle, and a' that.

* * * * * *

* *Swow*—I must confess.

He went to an early grave
With an empty stom-
Ach, and nobody would save.
He lieth still and dumb.

* * * * * * * *

A dog is as good as a goat,
And a log is as good as a boat.

* * * * * * * * *

A mule is as good as a coon,
And a bullfinch as a balloon.

* * * * * * *

A cow is as smart as a colt,
And a rail-fence as fair as a stump.
A calf is as gay as a thunderbolt,
And an ox is as fat as a pump.

At this point a current dog broke out into a two-edged howl that threatened to cut everything short, viz.:

It was the most curd—
Ling howl I ever heard.
Oh, how I felt like cursing
That cur for his occurrence,
Which did not have any reference
To anything I ever heard,
And wouldn't bear rehearsing.
He finally was cured,
And again my pen, immured
By the curious noise,
Began to rejoice, thus:

HOPE.

I hunger for something to eat
Just now,
Raw, cooked, hot or cold, sour
or sweet.
Oh, how
I would sing were my stomach at
rest I trow.
With a fragment of ox tightly,
pressed
It within.
'Tis a sin
To be centless and foodless,
And grim hunger struck,
While the passionless brood, less
Oppressed by ill-luck,
Laugh, hum, and dance by,
And the dog carelessly
Skips frisky and hale,
With a wink in his eye
And a wag on his tail.
Oh, it is tough
Raspingly rough,
When you can't get enough.
On rustled my pen.

AMUSEMENT.

Would I were home
  Where the spare-rib hot,
And the buttermilk cooked
  In the old iron pot

(Buttermilk pop
  We called it then:
Good for an infant,
  Better for men)

Boiled and bubbled,
  And smelled so sweet—
Come all who are troubled,
  O come and eat!

(My relative said—
  I wish I was dead.)

Blue bowls with flowers,
  Wild rose and brakes,
On go the hours,
  And my heart aches.

O Time! how quick you fly!
  Day comes and scoots away
Night comes and then we die,
  And then eternity's to pay.

I had only an instant to write a title to the next and a flew my pen.

SUNSET IN N. Y. HARBOR.

Blackish woe,
Like a crow,
Or a regular rook
In a three-cornered nook,
In a nook of my breast
Has made him a nest.
Woe, crow-like, is cawing,
And steadfastly gnawing,
And whistling and sawing.
Oh, why does he caw,
And warble "Ha, ha?"
To sadden my heart?
The sunset is streaming
O'er happy gulls screaming,
And merrily peeping,
The robins lie sleeping,
"Farewell, we must part."

On I dashed till midnight, driven by fiery fame, passionately putting down my thoughts. I had heard of men becoming famous in a night, and then understood its meaning. Ah! I cried, genius will assert itself. I thought I would continue till I had run out enough for a book. Everything I touched or looked at seemed voluntarily turning into verse, and of such a mysterious and wonderful kind. About midnight P. M. a neighbor's cat burst out into a continued fit of perplexed laughter, and it was then that I did my best, thus:

O furry, purry pest!
O fine feelin' feline!
O midnight cat!
Oh, fold thy ruffled crest!
Oh please stop squealin',
Oh, cuddle up and rest!

She ceased. If she hadn't it would probably be a verse or two longer. Then an influence, a whispering sensation, seemed crying out, "You have done enough. You must wait and let the world catch up with you." I heeded it, and only wrote a little hymn for myself, for I could write one kind as well as another. Thus:

Over the river Jordan,
To the land of the Hitti-te,
Amori-te, Canaani-te,
Periz. Hiv. and Jebusi-te,
Went Joshua, the warden
Of the Israeli-te.
Joshua the son of None,
Bade the Israelites to run
Round the walls of Jericho,
Which should fall by doing so.
"All the wealth the wall immures,
Gold and silver, shall be yours,"
Cried Joshua.
"Ha! ha! ha!"
Cried Israel.
And went pell-mell
Round the wall six days did flee,
Once a day with this idea.

None came in and none went out,
While they ran the wall about.
Seven priests, with much ado,
Seven rams' horn trumpets blew.

Not a word nor any noise
Should the rest make with their voice,
Till his own voice should cry out,
Then he said, "Ye all shall shout."

Six days passed and seven came,
Round the walls they chased their game.
In the light of the seventh sun,
Six times quiet did they run.

Then cried Josh., the son of Nor
Cry out, 'tis yours, your worl done;
Nobly, nobly have ye run.

Then a clamor rent the air,
As the game, forced from its lair
Heard them cry, "Ah, here we g
Round the walls of Jericho."

Seven times, with shriek and yel
Rushed the hosts of Israel,
And the walls of Jerich. fell.

Then they ruined all within,
'Cause they were so full of sin.

I couldn't stop my hymn until I threw my pencil out of tl window. I couldn't sleep; so I looked at myself in tl glass, and mused, "Anybody wouldn't think, to look at m what's in me," and then my eye fell on my nose in the glas My nose could be seen at a distance if the sun was righ and I said. "My nose *dooms* me to *success*, and *let it com* In that mood I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Next morning, after finding my pencil, I sought a remo church, not because I felt at all humble, but for oth reasons. As there would be a Sunday School lecturer aft the sermon, I decided to stay, thinking he might be a go subject for an article. I staid and got as near the front

possible, so that if he forgot what to say, he could admire me. He began and said, "It was owing to Sunday Schools that he was there." Then I was wild to get up and say something about anything, and how it was only chance that *I* had come. He spoke many and important truths, such as "Since all men are born, so must they die, even down to little children; are you ready?" He sounded as if he spake personally to everybody. He looked at me until I felt like being ashamed. Then I thought "I will be a Sunday School lecturer." Oh, my fortune is made. It was then that the beauties of Sunday Schools rose before me, and struck me best. I could hardly wait till he finished, in my anxiety to ask the minister if I could give the dear children a "treat" on another Sunday. Finally it was over, and I began starting toward the divine. Suddenly I experienced a difficulty in my body, a trouble in my breath, and a disastrous frivolity about my heart. It was leaping around as if ashamed of something, or in pain. A moment I waited trying to calm things, but they wouldn't calm. I was conscious of a universal lack somewhere. A gentleman in passing, held out his hand and bid me good morning, asking me how I enjoyed the exercises? "Very amusing," I replied. He looked odd, and passed by. Nearly all had gone, and I felt shocked lest I should let the chance of my greatness go by, so I made a new effort to reach him. The divine saw me (he was donning his coat) and advanced, holding his hand to me, smiling blandly and saying, "Brother, I am glad to see you," I answered in the affirmative, but my tongue suddenly forgot its cunning, and refused to stir, move I ever so energetically. He asked me if I was in the

habit of such things. I suppose now he meant "attending church," but I thought he had reference to my lingual lack. "No, no, no," I stammered, "it only takes me when I'm visiting." He seemed conscious that all was not right, but misinterpreting my feelings, laid his left hand on my right shoulder, and said, "Let us pray." "All right," I whispered, "suit yourself." I spoke, not knowing what I said. I didn't know how to act. I never was so embarrassed in all my life. I thought I should fall, in my confusion. I had always gone regularly to church, and had tried to do my duty, and it grieved me to have him take me for a sinner at first sight, when I had come on such important business. I knew I would have little chance for success any longer. I also wondered why it was that everybody inferred I must be a sinner. Many wild thoughts flew through my head. As he progressed, he grew more personal, and I more pained. I had never been called such names before, as he saw fit to associate with me. Finally he ceased, and asked me how I felt. "*Better*," I said. Then he looked as if he was longing to adopt me for his own, or for some friend, and grasping my hand, said, "A great work has been done, brother, for you *do* look better." He asked me whence I came. I told him I had forgotten. He had utterly blasted me. He looked more rejoiced, and cried, "Good, you have *not forgotten*. 'Old things are passed away.'"

Then he said, "What doest thou?" And I said, "I do write for the New York papers." A queer expression, pale with horror, sought refuge in his face. My hand fell from his. A difficulty in his vocal organs betokened a change,

as if he were wrestling with a new and unexpected conviction. "For—forgive me," he gasped, "I meant—no—harm. It—was—a—mistake." Whether he had committed an unpardonable sin in trifling with any one associated with the contaminating influence of the New York press, or whether he thought I was trying to get up a scandal with him, I never have learned, for he turned quickly and vanished, much as a young partridge doeth, and my hope was disinherited. I have since thought that had he known I did no more than write for the papers, as yet, he might have invited me to dine. I went home with my faith in man sadly pulverized, and read in the Book of Job, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble," and had no more doubts about my origin, and sighed, wishing I was as sure of the first promise as of the last. In this mood I wrote out a list of things which should be the subjects of my muse:

HEN.

A foul and egotistic biped.

SWINE.

Of all things small or big,
I hate (except a pig)
A hog, a swine,
With all his guzzle,
More like a Chinese puzzle.
He is. A mystic brute,
And loves to root.

MUD-TURTLE.

Gay reveler of night,
Mud-turtle!
O shelly water sprite!
Oh, what a funny sight!
I wouldn't curt'l
Thy liquid fun,
Or hurt
Thee, turt-
Led one.
Twin sister of the crab,
But with another hab-
It thou art,
And twice as smart.

MUEL.

O, shrilly mu*el*,
I wouldn't wish
To fight a duel
With any fish,
Much less with thee,
With all thy charms,
And give you choice of arms.

For should you choose your leg
My life would be but dregs.
I should be beat
By a mulish feat.
No, no; I would not *do well*
To trifle with a muel.

Other subjects to be developed.

Lightning-bug.	Peanut.	Calf.
Coon.	Cat.	Kangaroo.
Goose.	Cattle.	Bug.
Pie-plant.	Ox.	Etc.

I had put down a list of everything I could think of t I had ever seen, except a few sea monsters that I had ne seen, calculating to notice each one in a new way, and tl I would begin to be original.

CHAPTER XXV.

Monday found me again early at my office. My le had not arrived, but I knew that it would, so I began w ing to all the editors I knew of. I felt that I could wı enough to keep all the papers full, and thereby could tra It seemed as if all I cared about was to get out of W street, and go somewhere. In this mood, I wrote th lines, and sent them to a "brick tower," whose spire e gleams in the light of a sun that never has set since journey begun (for lack of a seat, perhaps. I'm only fun):

Why doth the hoot owl sleep by day
  And sleepless hoot at night?
Simply because the night's dim ray
  Is better for his sight.

And so with Truth: she shineth out
  By night as well as day,
And ever knows what she's about,
  While others pass away.

It seems as if I improved every time I took to the pen. Then I wrote:

"EDITOR OF T ——:

"*Dear Sir*—I do not wish to live always, but I do want to write for your paper. It is my only aim in life to be a great writer. I want your advice on a few lines I send, and tell me if you think I will make a journalist, and why; and how successful I will be, and where I had better go to start. I have a great intensity for travel, and wish to do so.

"What is your opinion of travel? Would you travel for health or for your own amusement? Where is it best to go? I want to get in good society, and am going to leave Wall street, where my morals have been hurt, for I am easily influenced by things. Good society, in my mind, is the only thing worth living for. In either event I stand ready to go anywhere you think best, and send you back the most puzzlingly sweet letters.

"Yours finally,

"NIL RAVEN."

Grasping a strip of writing paper, I ran to a neighboring news stand, and taking down the names of the principal periodicals thereon, rushed back in triumph to continue my literary career. My plan was, first to send a letter to all responsible editors, as a sample of my ability, and to

let them know I was in the market to supply all their wants in my line.

So in a joyous frame of mind I began the following.

"EDITOR OF ———:

"*Dear Sir*—My greatest interest in life is to be a Christian at work on your zealous sheet. I have had bad luck in Wall street, and after trying all things in vain, while poverty crept into my stomach through a big hole in my pocket, I determined to write for a living or die in the attempt. I am full of fun and a forgiving spirit; the two things that must upbuild the world. A large boy flogged me once and I forgave him, but it ain't over with us yet. I give you this incident only as a sign of my fidelity. I want to feel very proud of myself, and can be so only in writing for you. I would like to send you (since young writers should keep close to facts) a few confidential remarks on Job, as witnessed by eye-witnesses, lit up by a few lines on the setting sun as seen by myself, and its probable effect on the ancients. I am very forlorn, and in some of my worst instants, between meals, have made some rare poetry. I will send you one poem to use, entitled, "The Gypsy and the Oyster." All who have seen it say it is the best they ever saw, falling desperately in love with it, while they cast pitying glances at me, whispering "He won't live long;" but as I always have lived as long as my neighbors, I ain't worried. What do you think? You are the only one whose opinion I value; I have just written it.

THE GYPSY AND THE OYSTER.

A Gypsy with his feet quite sore,
With travel,
Came wandering down the sea's rough shore
With gravel;
And cried, "I wish that I was dead,
Because my life is tough," he said.

An oyster waddled to the beach
For quiet,
His oyster bed was just in reach.
His diet
That night should be a grain of sand
Mixed with a scent of happy land.

The Gypsy saw the oyster creep—
"The treasure!"—
And skip about the frisky deep
For pleasure.
And then the Gypsy dried his tears;
For joy
Burst out and swept away his fears.
A boy
Could not have been more boisterous
He clutched the careless oyster—
"Kus!"
The oyster swore, "Is it my lot
By a worn-out Gypsy to be got—
And swallowed,
Unhallowed?"
And then the Gypsy, laughing, wept
And sung.
Adown the beach he softly crept,
And hung
For very shame his sandy head,
And bit his tongue.
No more he wished that he was dead.
"The ways of things is strange," he said.
Then on one leg he balanced,
The Gypsy, with his face so red,
And climbed into the oyster bed,
And on the slumbering inmates fed,
Until he stopped from very dread
Lest he to sinning should be led.

MORAL.

Remember, when you want to die,
Something is wrong somewhere, and try
To find the reason why,
And like the poor Gypsy,
Play well your part,
And then new heart
Will come to end your misery.

"Artfully yours,

"NIL RAVEN."

If this did not suit, I knew he was not a suitable man.

For some reason I never heard anything about this marvelous plot, but have thought that he too might think me unable to survive, and being editor of a good paper, wouldn't dare encourage me to live.

A Baptist address lying before me inspired me thus:

"EDITOR ———:

"*Dear Sir*—I would not be sentimental, but ever since I knew anything I have been tormented with a zeal to subscribe and write for an honest, industrious Baptist paper. My folks were all Methodists, but there was no method in me, and formerly, when they thought I was in bed, in the dead of night, I used to steal out and hunt for Baptist children to play tag and gambol with, and when I couldn't find any, I sat up the rest of the night drinking

water to keep my breath pure and free from insects and other nocturnal bugs.

"I want to help you bear your burden. I am young and have taught school, and have nothing to amuse me save you. I want to be a mighty Baptist, and have a withering joke on the Methodists that will make you laugh if you let it. I prefer strange subjects, such as the death of Adam, and Eve's sorrow at the idea of her desolation. I have also a very able scrap on Cain and his Sabbath thoughts after the failure, ending with a pointed remark on Jacob's unscrupulous fooling of his father. I know he wasn't a Baptist, probably a Congregationalist, as words were no object with him, unless he could weave fantastic tales thereof. But as we are too old to talk, let us pause. I can have two columns for you to-morrow, consisting of jokes, puns, and conundrums for the ignorant who read your paper. They will be good, safe Baptist puns, such as 'Why do we live, and what were Adam's political views?' I also have a most entrancing s-a-y on the lightning-bug, his cause, and *why*, in which I set forth why he appears as he does. It is said to be the best ever produced of its kind, and there is only one kind; some say he will have gleamed his latest ere another will be needed. Astronomers and old women *assure* me that it will rival a fixed star if not impaired. It was made to undermine skepticism of the nineteenth century. Its influence has been immense among other bugs, such as the humbug and bugbear. If you can be quiet about it, I will send you a few lines, and you can send for more at leisure, but be quick, as I am in need of sympathy, else I wouldn't compromise the bug."

* * * * * * * *

I won't give the lines here, but I added a P. S.

"This is but one side of the bug, his dark side; he has a light side, like every other cloud. I hope you will send for it. When I get rich I will collect it and make a book for the use of the heathen. It grows better and better as it ad-

vances, finally ending in the ultimate but triumphant giving up of said bug, and after his transient glitter his rest is sure.

"NIL RAVEN."

Reperusing my last effort I became ecstatic, for I knew that no living Baptist could do so any more without my letters. Confident that my last letter would probably establish my reputation, I thought it might be well to get more on account of influence, and will give you the next communication made while the inspiration was upon me:

"EDITOR OF N. Y. ———:

"*Dear Sir*—I want advice. You are the only man I ever truly loved, because you are the only man I never truly knew. Once I hoed corn, but a city diet is killing me. Soup-houses have worn me out before my time, and I, like you, am too proud to go back to the corn-field. Black woe has gone to roost in my heart, like a crow on a burnt pine stump. I sometimes exclaim, 'Why am I?' And echo says, 'You ain't.' But what I mean is, can I write for you whom I so love? My trouble seems fitting me up to be a poet. Where would you advise me to set up, with a view to prosperity? And I wish you would give me a list of subjects that give best satisfaction to readers, and if you know of any new idea, that hasn't been written yet, send it. If you would give a few rules in your paper for young and struggling poets, you might be the means of much festivity among them. I know of several young and healthy men who are sick of all legitimate business, and are leaning on their daily pens for a weakly support. Now, with a few words from you—'O hilarious centre of the solar system!'—they could be bolstered up and do a thriving business, and could lovingly refer to you as 'a thing of beauty and a joy forever.' But if you should feel unequal to my requests, have you enough personal influence with the Presi-

dent to give me an introduction, as I am thinking of establishing a home for inquisitive orphans at Washington inquiring for office? If you can not give me any encouragement, would you tell me the price of ferry tickets to the Sandwich Islands?—the most satisfying name of all history to a hungry man. If you have any influence with the Mayor, I will agree to take all the beggars of New York and vicinity there, and set up a monarchy with us at the head. I would be poet laureate, and you could relate to the beggars your future hopes.

"I have also a startling little political poem on the origin of ant-eaters, and a few notes on the nightingale, taken down one boisterous night.

"Tremblingly I wait.

"Yours freely,

"NIL RAVEN."

I was so stirred up by this little appeal that I inclosed a little poem which had been a great comfort to me in some of my darkest hours. I will only give the first verse now, viz.:

He was a man of strength,
And he always did his duty,
For his nose made up in length
Wherein it lacked in beauty.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Hilarious at my sense of future success, when the letters, like good seed scattered in good soil, the editors' hearts, should grow, blossom, and shake their delightful fruits over me, I cast them forth and waited a little.

One afternoon, while in this condition, thinking it high time for the appearance of a few, at least, of the first fruits

of these literary seeds, the postman greeted me with a confidential glimmer in his eye, and gave me a letter, which I clasped exuberantly to my side, and cried, "Old heart revive." A moment in silent adoration I lingered, and then breaking the seal read:

"DEAR NIL—Would you like a cheese? I can't think of any more news, except if you do want a cheese, say so, for I have a lovely one to send you.

"Your loving,

"KEZIA."

Ha! ha! ha! ah! Well, well, ha! ha! For a little, forgetting my true mission, I let my feelings run merry and laughed thoroughly. Hurriedly I replied:

"DEAR KEZIA—I would rather have a cheese than any other living thing. Cheese is all the fashion here. Send it at once. "Aff. "NIL."

CHAPTER XXVII.

A week went and I was mad, having hoped for much prompter treatment. The eighth morning brought me the long coveted missive. Well, a man is a strange thing. I was so flustered that I could hardly tear it open, and read with bated breath:

"NIL RAVEN, Esq.:

"*Dear Sir*—I recognize your powers; you are an original cub, but, like the kangaroo, were not meant for society. You are too young to write. Give up the quill. Go to the plow and raise me a barrel of potatoes or a hog. Never write for a living if you expect to live long, and for heaven's sake don't live long if you must write for a living. I give

you these rules as I would to a pet son. Give up your ideas of poetry, and go to reading or sawing wood. Go home, work and buy a farm, get rich, then send me a short story of your life, and I will print it, and you will bless me."

* * * * * * * *

"But, like the kangaroo, etc." Calamity! Who am I, to be taken for a sinner one day, and a kangaroo the next? Was I made to be a foot-ball for the world, to be kicked and mixed up with foreign ingredients like the kangaroo? O, what's the use of virtue in such an hour? But my hope was too glowing that morning to be entirely crushed. For an hour I wrestled with this new angel, and during that time determined to bring all the forces of my misused nature to bear on the editors of the New York press, and conquer their prejudice; for I am a man, and will be recognized. Yes, they shall feel my power. I will bring them to my feet. I will have 'em all pleading for my wonderful poems with parched tongues. Then my revenge will come. Then how unsatisfactory Shakespeare and the Danbury News will be, when they all snap greedily at my "Frog!"

In this reckless mood I tried to lose track of my identity, and penned the following to the editor of a daily paper:

"DEAR SIR—I have no insane hankering after life; never had, in fact; but if I ain't promptly allowed to write for your paper, I shall be forced into a morbid condition of foreign travel—a thing for which I am neither fit nor able at present. I am playing the game of life, and am tired and rather uneasy. It is a lively game and full of fun if you are on the right side; but on any other side it is like the belabored end of a flail. Yet, let us pause and be more cheerful, since life is fleeting. I am anxious to send you a

few fragmentary compends of what I remember since I was born. Among other things, I have a very amusing instance of an ox when I was young. My range of subjects is from the insect to the stork; also from the hen's egg to the iceberg. I also deal in many pleasing styles of fiction. But while we are on the subject, I would like to say a few words on mud, written at twilight, to console a man for his lack of wit. I will give you the first chapter, viz.:

"The origin of mud is unknown. By some it is considered to be one thing; but by the most amiable it is thought to be of an entirely opposite nature. Ornithologists, and many whose views on any subject are useless, have declared Adam to be the first discoverer of mud, bringing up as a proof of this interesting fact, that Eve in her careless betraying of the apple was all muddled up, and otherwise unsettled. But others, with a more acute and historic sense of truth, have resolved that she was only mad at Adam for plaguing her about her ignorance of the multiplication table, as manifested in her unique selection of *one* apple, which she did, not through ignorance, but only to indicate the unity of her and him. But the real trouble originated in this manner, viz.: As Eve took the apple and bit it, and held it to Adam with a sweet smile and these words, 'And thus may our spirits mingle,' Adam, it is said, looked sour, and complained that she had taken too big a bite, at which she suddenly blushed, and bursting into many tears, cried, 'It is no such thing!' and added that he probably had lied. In this mood she ate the apple all up, except the core, which she threw at her bereaved partner. From these facts we must infer that they never had quarreled until the mystic influence of that unscrupulous apple disarranged them, thereby setting them so much at variance that their children have never settled up as yet.

"It was truly a turning-point in their career. But they are gone, and who would bring back their inactive dust o'er which to shed a tear and question about the mystery of mud.

"Hunting over the Arctic researches of that illustrious

Chinese, Confucius, I find a cunning tribute to mud in the death and sudden failure of a bosom friend, viz.:

> Man is a chunk of clay
> Filled up with blood;
> But when he dies away,
> Then he is mud.
> Mud, mud, vile mud—
> A mixture of clay mixed with blood.
>
> ——— ———."

Still did my spirit burn; still did I write to an old and well-established editor, who I knew would be glad to aid anybody:

"DEAR SIR—Would you think it a sin, or, in other words, do you care if I am independent? If you have no personal objections to my amusement, I would rather write for you than anything. You are the only editor that deserves a historic tribute affixed to your memory, for our tastes are so similar. If there is anything in fate, I am a ruined man unless I receive a gift, or something happens at once. I have experienced everything, from hunting eggs, and other domestic researches, to traveling for a living, and in each event have failed. At last everything seems pointing toward journalism as a way out of sorrow. It is said that before I could cry correctly, I developed a strange but conspicuous passion for paper wads, by which the literary and useless qualities of all papers within my reach were tested and expressed according to their merits, or otherwise, by my looks and other spontaneous actions. If a paper pleased me, it is said that I would instantly roll over on my back, and extending my limbs to the four corners of the universe, would smile in the most enervating way, lying in this condition several hours, and speechless.

"But one day a stranger came to visit us (we lived on a farm). She came from Brooklyn, and had in her pocket a piece of newspaper made in said city. I will not mention the name of the paper. If you have seen it you will recognize it by its fruits, viz.:

"She had not been in the house ten minutes before my wadding faculty, ever on the alert, watching a chance as she slyly drew it out for a word of advice, enabled me to appropriate a small piece to my mouth, at which instant my symptoms were awful intense.

I swelled and expanded,
And yelled double handed,

till every old lady in the neighborhood rushed in, and out of breath, to call on us and see me swell. Never, tho' I should live to be a scholar, shall I forget the penurious expression of those scared old gossips, as they suddenly fell to muttering and singing that my last end might be more consistent. There was no visible end to me.

In rushed the doctors, those excited pillars of civilization, and vainly sought my pulse (for although my body had many members, all boundaries, all sects and divisions were forgotten in my hour of uncertainty—another illustration of final unity). Finally they unitedly exclaimed, "He has been trifled with!—and none can hinder." Then all was mute, while on I swelled—still ever on anon—till all the old ladies were crowded out, some crying, "The devil!" and others flying homeward to commune in secret and carry their babes to the garret.

As my last eye was closing on a worldly scene, filled in with men, women, and children, and other nameless things—in such an hour for the last time, a mulatto nurse girl that had done much toward making my infancy the happiest moment of my life, worked her passage to what should be the nether part of my lip, and cried, "O Nil, eat just one more wad, please." I strove to wink, but was too deaf to follow her train of thought just as she, with all the dexterity of unlimited impatience, finding my mouth, crowded part of a paper—the editorial column—between my teeth.

Oh, mighty fuss!

What a change! In less than three minutes I was well and crying, as usual, having shrunk to the size of seven

years. All were stupefied with daze, and gasped, "He has been joking!"

Finally a doctor, wiser than some, rushed and plucked the last strip of dissolving paper from my happy mouth, on which these fading letters, "I, N, D, E, P, E, N, D, E, N, T," dimly asserted themselves. All wept, calling it a mighty independent wad, and subscribed for it at once.

But let trivial things pass. I have no old claims to settle. My business is with you; for you alone are dear to me. I shall lie much awake in the near future, thinking of you. This is one of my habits.

I have been called smart, and was once unfortunate enough in one of my very absent fits to steal a neighboring trout from a spring, and take it home with me to put in a little spring in our back-yard; but owing to the carelessness of our hired girl in her preparations for supper, the trout was completely ruined, being deprived of his fins, scales, and other affairs peculiar to a trout's health. Just as I found out her painful mistake, all at once I saw the neighbor coming across lots, just as if he was chasing an enemy's bull.

I was about to yell out, "Your old trout ain't here!" when I suddenly changed my mind, and climbing up to the rafter in the wood-shed, laid thereon several hours, listening to the music below. I didn't want any supper that night, and crawled into my bed-room through a little window opening on the roof.

Now, I am bound to make myself useful to you, and would like to start a few comments on early infancy and crab apples, with their respective relations to the millennium. I also trust that I may prove so comforting to you that when you are gleaned for the last time, I may fill and otherwise o'erflow your once vacant spot. Or do you know of any editor who is on the sick list, and bids fair to be garnered? If so, bid the poor fellow cheer up. I will relieve him.

Let him sing his last song,
And pass on and repent.
Let him swallow his rage,
While I follow the page
His eye once did rest on intent;

And when he to dust is
Gone, I will do justice
To his mem—
O—ry. Dem—
Er—i—to—
Ri—ous tho'
It may be.

the last stroke fell, I was completely awed, and fold-
› my two hands sat wondering what mighty purpose
ı store for me, until my sportive blood leapt hilarious
discovery of another plan in my brain, which, as soon
›ok the pen, unraveled itself thus:

ıR SIR—I am a great lover of Christian Unions, and
rather be reckoned one of you than to eat in the pres-
›f a cannibal. I am striving for a little personal in-
e to start a mission school or a free lunch in Alaska,
ıich I am searching after old Bibles, busts of Adam,
n Shakespeares, for the sake of instruction and orna-
. I have been all over the amusing land of Alaska,
ıg after pearl oysters among the ruins for my Jove.
as very fond of pearl oysters. Yet she was one of those
atures that was not ashamed to be found in the com-
of any well-to-do oyster. But to continue: I got on
ack of one, when, owing to starvation and other em-
ssing sensations, I gave up the chase before bringing
›ay. All the natives were very clamorous to have me
among them (they kept me bound hand and foot
ıl months) and establish the above-named industries;
o speak as I feel, I consider a free lunch really indis-
ble to the survival of the fittest there any longer, as it
away all vitality to support yourself in such a remote
:e. I promised them if they would let me go, that I
l endeavor to succor them, and would also get your
›n; and when I drew the likeness of your face along
›nd, they all went off in tangents of delight, as if they
fully trust you. With a little care on your part, we

might establish a real exhilarating spruce gum trade out of mission hours. It has also been remarked by competent witnesses that I have a rare faculty for living, and that with a little encouragement I would make a great traveler.

Likewise, if you are willing, I would like to send you a style of my writing to it—for (to wit):

Your independent brother brought out a very poetical poem lately, entitled "Flying of the Swallow," and then I thought of us and said, "It shall not be that we are to be outwitted by man or devil raised on that small island of the sea—the home of Shakespeare, and other foreigners." So I wrote a real pungent poem on the "Swallowing of the Fly," as witnessed by myself. It is the best and only one of its nature ever made, with a withering tendency on the flight of time, as witnessed by a little girl in the Rocky Mountains. It was a fly swallowed unconsciously by a personal friend while arguing on the beauty of holiness. Rapt, I listened, his face was so expressive, and his style so convincing—but hark!

Suddenly a buzzing sound was manifested in his stomach, whither a tumultuous wild fly had recklessly stumbled. I never knew such a change. His face—hitherto, so beautiful, so gentle and tender, assumed an almost frivolous aspect, while a grotesque and inward turning of the eye suggested a forced fit of introspection, or self-examination really harrowing. Excitedly, he made a trivial inquiry about the perplexity of life, and the proper use of things, and suddenly gave up business for the day.

Living in Brooklyn, his pathway lay over the ferry. On the boat, meeting a rare but accomplished girl he had never seen before, he coughed and tried to disguise a few of his feelings to deceive her. But the quick eye of woman, ever on the alert, saw something was wrong, and she, looking hurt, passionately exclaimed to a bosom friend, "O mercy! he looks as if he had swallowed a fly—just what my poor brother died of." "Wh-wh-wh," but he could say no more; he had fainted.

P. S.—It is all told in blissful, energetic verse. The characters are all carefully betrayed, so that in the young man's look you readily distinguish a buzzing sensation, and can discriminate the nature of the fly. But lest you should be taken sick, and should vanish before you are able to send for the poem, I will give you an idea of the plot, viz.: As soon as he faints, the accomplished girl does not scream and make a great fuss, or run to the other cabin and jump overboard. She only takes off her hat, and letting down a cabin window leans out, as if enjoying the climate, but in reality dips up her hat full of East river and spontaneously dashes it and contents playfully o'er his ornamental summit, at which, with dripping eyes and briny countenance, he returns to more active pursuits. Finally, after a short but painful courtship, with flying pains in his buzzum, he betakes himself to matrimony.

It was the most high-born minute of my life when the finished letter lay before me, and in this mood I let my muse stray to a little Eastern village styled Danbury. (I am sorry now that I let my muse go that way; it is too far East for me.) But to my letter:

ED. OF ———: *Dear Sir*—I am now an iron seller. Yet I never sold a ton. It is the hardest thing I ever came against for a living, unless it is weeding onions; and, without speaking ironically, I was not always thus, and pine for higher things. With the rope-walker, my cry is "Excelsior!"—a particular friend of our family. I wrote the best poem I ever wrote, the other day, subject—"Old Hat." Cause of subject two-fold. First, my love for things of antiquity—it was very old. Secondly, I wanted a new one. I would like to add that the new one still hangs in the show-window. I also notice that at the instigation of a certain graphic N. Y. paper, you have ceased joking on biblical literature, etc., which I admire in you, for your ex-

treme self-denial. Nevertheless, I doubt not that many of the ladies in your village will gladly hear a few words in palliation of the apparent neglect of Job's wife in his trial. For many years her actions have caused me unalloyed anxiety, as they did not correspond to my preconceived ideas of what a woman's loyalty to her lord should be. In fact, this had been one of the serious impediments in the way of my proposing to one of my acquaintances. (She's married since.) But yesterday, as I came down Wall street, after a fruitless endeavor to dispose of a little honest iron, I was cheered by the consoling thought that she abandoned him simply because she had too great a Job on her hands. However, my main object in writing you is to infuse a little new life into your weary sheet. She don't breathe as easily as she did; or, perhaps, the Eastern air is not strong enough. I seem doomed to an uncertain existence, and would like to amuse the world. So far, she has not amused worth assent. In other words, I am anxious to send you weekly contributions full of fun and foreign jokes, fiction, and other things of a periodical nature. But should these fail to do you any good, I would cease sending you weakly contributions, lest I should prove a Danbury nuisance.

Confidingly yours,

——— ———.

Glancing on a paper before me, I saw a note descriptive of the departure of a certain distinguished American gentleman, who had left home to travel for his amusement. He was also connected with a paper. So I wrote to the bereaved members of the concern, who were left at home to carry on the arduous task of keeping things quiet till his return. I wrote more for a joke, and as a means of impressing them with my natural wit, than otherwise. So I began thus:

GENTLEMEN:—I see by your paper that your proprietor is in Algiers. I hate to speak about such foreign matters, but do you suppose he has enough influencé with the Queen to learn the present condition of the country as regards corkscrews? I would like to dispose of a couple. I would also be quite willing to gain a small but respectable cork trade with 'most any moral person who wouldn't cheat. I cheat easy, because my health is poor, and I don't feel able for much competition. I am sorry that I can't disguise my feelings better, but I am very anxious to establish a foreign but intellectual owl trade with some rare but honest Egyptian family.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

My last set of letters being sealed and sent, elated I repaired to my home. On my way thither I saw hand-bills foretelling the approach of Ole Bull, and then I quickly mused, "Oh, I will hear thee, Ole Bull."

Yes, Ole Bull,
My heart is full,
To hear the gushing din
Of thy old violin.

I heard Ole Bull, and my feelings at meeting him for the first time you will find in the words I immediately indited before sleeping again. I sent them to a prominent editor, viz.:

"*Dear Sir* – Can I write you a few critical and ornamental essays on "Ole Bull, and his fiddle." I heard them once and must confess I wish you had been there. It was the mightiest fiddling of its nature and order that I ever witnessed.

"I have been wild in parts ever since, and have saved up a stray cat for his amusement, at small cost, in case his fid should crack. I would very much like to have said cat turned into the "Last Rose of Summer," under the pressure of his diamond bow. Any cat ought to consider herself deeply blessed at such luck. If not, could you advise me of the easiest way to get a living or so. I have been warned to go to the editor of the "Wide World" for advice, as he takes deep interest in such as can't help themselves. As for me I would gladly help myself if there was anything lying around loose, which there ain't. Do you know where there is? If not, I would like to preach. Do you know of any body who would lend me a small, but truthful, congregation for a few weeks? If not, could you put me on the track of an old railroad ticket cheap, or to lend? I want to go somewhere, and will let said ticket decide that. When a man is in need of a change, one direction is as good as another. But if your knowledge is limited, can you inform me of some romantic and unhealthy spot in which to establish a private cemetery? the only undertaking for which my capital is fit. It is a hard world to live in, and I should be ashamed to be found otherwise in it, lest the angels should malign me. It may seem trifling, but I would like to begin life again. Where had I better start. Do you know anybody who would lend me a few things for the purpose of a private auction? For if I go away I must sell out. I have only a cider barrel and picture frame. It has been said that I have great endowments for a natural book concern, or a whale-fishery, but I leave this to your judgment.

"If you have any personal influence in the Gulf Stream, I would like to visit it, as I have a new kind of puzzle for the natives. With a little care on your part, you may be the occasion of much help to me, otherwise I would not ask you. All you can do for me will be like giving a microscope to a blind man, or eating a peach out of season.

"Dilapidatedly,

"NIL RAVEN."

"P. S.—I have also a charming little pastoral entitled, "The Pleasures of a Tin Peddler; or, The Dangers of Over-Eating."

I also sent a few lines as a fragment of my appreciation, entitled "Faith," viz.:

FAITH.

If you and I should die to-morrow,
Where would we go?
Hand in hand from the land of sorrow
And blank-faced woe?
Or would it be
To misery?

If you and I should separate,
And go away,
We'll say, to day—
I wonder what would be our fate?

Oh, would we meet,
Where all is sweet,
Within the land
Of happiness,
Free from forced foolishness?

MORAL.

[illegible]s, therefore, let us pause,
Since we must go,
And study up the laws,
Why things are so?
And learn full why
We all must die.

It was after several uneasy days had elapsed without bringing any answers, that, owing to my prolonged success in the literary field, I, like Job, opened my mouth and cursed my day, groaning freely. If I had not opened my mouth, I should probably have felt just as bad.

I was much more forsaken than Job, for he had three faithful friends, who ran to him from a distance to comfort him in his hour of uneasiness, and oh! how satisfying it must have been to him, to hear Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar coming on a full run. Then to hear them stop a little away from him and playfully throw and scatter dust over their heads, to let him know whence his friends had come. And that last touching act of theirs, how it must have affected

him! when they, out of respect, came and sat in the dust
his side, for the period of seven days, without sayin
word, or mentioning the object of their visit, waiting to
if Job would ever recognize them.

But I had no one to come and sit by me, except my la
lady, who would come and stand at my side, by the ho
when I was reading an essay I had just written on the
gin and Use of Time, talking about her victuals and ask
about my prospects, and wondering if I ever could lend
the dollar and thirteen cents I owed her.

Still my hope clung to me, always buoying me up for
coming joy; it seemed to say, "Go on, go on! you are grea
than you know." Then I would put down lines that I co
not understand myself, for somewhere I had heard that
nius writes better than it knows.

And it always consoled me when I wrote a line, wh
meaning or fitness had passed from my memory, to feel t
a keen and discriminating world would comprehend it,
write a commentary thereon, so that even I could get a l
ter insight therein. "O genius! thou art great," I cried,
since I was feeling particularly literary, I communed w
the guiding spirit of a literary journal, thus:—

"DEAR SIR—I am on the verge of a crisis. Nor is the th
new to me. Cereous questions come up to me in the shape
Shall I continue to eat, and how? I have been read
Shakespeare to see what his private idea of life amounts
I have heard that he is good authority on such subje
and as for Shakespeare, let us pause and do him justice,
he certainly has made several good remarks; enough
make the fame of an ordinary man. But as for me, one
his most comforting assertions was in the form of Macbe

misinformed man, who for his wife's sake, did a deed on can so disastrous, that his own better judgment should ɔ said, I won't do it; and when, after his wife tartly , 'Now what's done, *is done*,' he cried out, so true to 'We have scorched the snake, not killed it,' and ıtly added, 'Duncan is in his grave. After life's fitful r he sleeps well.' It was then that I fell in love with ɛespeare. Oh, I tell you those words were the key-note of ɜarthly success. And then he says in his sly way, through Macbeth, 'For Banquo's issue have I filled my mind.' was a noble saying, a noble act, and one of the grand- ɔffering sof history; to fill his mind for his friend's child, not fill his stomach for his own sake, is more than I can ɜrstand.

But lest you should tremble at the idea of my building on ɛespeare's fame, I will cease, by adding that there is no ɔt in my mind of his ability, and that he will probably ive many of his commentators. And if I wished to say ıgle word against him, I wouldn't, because he is dead. fact was told me by the janitor's clerk, who was born brought up in his tomb—England – whose fair temples teeming peoples are but the ornate and fantastic in- ɔtions on his tombstone."

was so moved by these words that I felt like loving the le world and befriending everybody, and wrote thus to editor of the *Postman*.

DEAR SIR:—As I have nothing else to do, I would like e your friend, for which favor will you be mine, and me of some small but roundabout way to an honest ıg? I have tried everything else; but like an eagle ing prey in the sun, I am baffled, and have come to t on your post, hoping you won't attempt to scare me 'There is a time to write,' they say. I may be wrong, think my write time has come. If I live, I seem forced ıake a living—the hardest thing I ever tried of its kind.

I am also struggling for an interview with the most influential man about your concern, as I have things to tell him that concern us. If you were ever forced to do anything, you will catch my meaning. I would like a place on your post as private historian and other things. I have a strange sketch on early death, suggested by personal poor health; I have also a marvelous description of a New England cabbage, as experienced by a boy. But chiefly I want to be a poet—if you care, I want to know it. I prefer to write on things of life and other festive occasions, such as sudden shocks and calamities of a like nature: I have a heroic poem on the 'Flight of a Swine.' My friends all say they won't take your paper, or, in other words, won't hitch to your post, if I ain't on it to comfort them. And even you would hate to be rambling among a small valley on a summer trip, and stumble over a stone marked thus: 'Gone to an early grave with an empty stomach, superinduced by a lack of food. Thus he died as he lived, hungry, because he couldn't find anything fit to eat.' You may think me too grasping, but that's your affair. I aim only to be on the safe side of life. Which side do you suppose that is? Can you tell me of any one who is going to make a will, so that I can be provided for? Or I would go as tutor in a small but wealthy family with no children. I am a splendid tutor. Some one has said 'as-tute a man as is.' I am hunting for some place to call my own. Do you know of such a spot? I have found several that suited me, but was unable to call them my own. Now here is a chance; take advantage of me if you will. I shall not always be here. I shall travel. I may die. In either event I shall not return, for why should I? I would not live forever or for anybody, unless I had more impressive evidence of a fuller future on its way to me. Now it rests with you. Your answer decides my fate, either by giving me a new hope or by blasting the old. I am young, and with care will be beautiful, and then if you are able you can have my portrait. I am slow in giving up, but when I *do*, there's no coaxing back till the Last day.

ve several times been saved from a secular death, and am king to you to repeat it. Still my articles are the best I er wrote—my friends say they are even better. I hope u will have no objection to my furnishing a dozen for you. refer writing on natural history and snow-flakes. I also ve a most trenchant sketch on buttermilk, and its proba- effect on negro babies, or in case of sudden sea-sickness the family, with a moral to it, in which I slightly touch cheese. I have a real instructive and highly-wrought position on the origin of Chinese puzzles and other games chance, ending with a very touching account of corks, ch now and hereafter, in which the question is casually ted, Is the cork immortal? suggested by a seed lent me an enemy. I have also been very successful in majestic scriptions of the wild nutmeg. Also a tantalizing criti- m on an empty stomach, its cause and cure. But let vial things pass; my business is with you, and I would so proud to furnish you with a stupendous little discourse the length of rabbits, for the amusement of old women, ggested by seeing one out of employment. Also an ener- tic and repulsive dissertation on long life and its effect on emperance, ending with a life-size criticism on the pyra- d, or a few notes on a Brazilian camel, as witnessed by other. "NIL RAVEN.

'P. S.—I would write more if I had time. I love all edi- s, and they deserve better things."

CHAPTER XXIX.

ly roving spirit had led me to many and various resorts Sabbath worship, sometimes joining in the gay currents resting, when for a little they ceased their flow, within shade of some rare temple; and sometimes wantonly bling in a new orbit. But wherever I went I was much

impressed with the text, "And through the foolishness of preaching the world shall be saved." Finally, 'mid all the demoralizing adversities of life, a sense of inexpressible peace swelled o'er my waning soul at the idea of being in such a heavenly company, for I knew—ah, enrapturing thought!—that Brooklyn would be saved utterly—sweet Brooklyn! fair focus where the delightful expounders of the Word do so brim over with the truth of that rare text!—and I cried, "And I will preach! I, too, will build a temple majestic, a column fair—I, too, will be great, for *I*—oh, happy thought!—*can be as foolish as anybody.*"

Oh, it would have made you proud to see the letter I wrote to a Brooklyn divine, asking advice about preaching, and how he felt the first time he was called to preach (if he was called more than once). I told him that I had a queer buzzing in my ear and a riotous pain in my stomach. I asked him if he did too; then I offered to preach a little in his church, just where I could be appreciated, for the sake of a start. Then I asked him if he had any old sermons to sell cheap, or if he knew anybody who had—I did not care, so they were old. I sent him this marvelous poem, viz.:

Oh, I have got to preach,
Ah, yes, and preach I will,
I cannot over-reach
Longer for things of ill,
For boisterous things to fill
My stomach yearning.
Ah, since we all must die,
Tell me the reason why
I shall not preach?

Yes, I will preach, why not?
Blood bubbles in my heart
And whispers, "Preach you ought."
And pricks me up to start,
Till I am burning.
I know that I can preach
It is my only aim
Eternity can teach
The glory of my fame,

I know you will concur
With me, and help me, sir,
Since I must preach.
Oh, I would rather preach
And so use up my breath
And revel in my speech,
Than die a careless death.
Thus, therefore, let us revel
And scare to death the devil,
While nature sings,
That men may learn
To live and yearn
For better things.
But
Where shall I preach
Since preach I must?
O, I beseech
Your answer.
You know, I'm going back to dust,
Too bad, brave men breathe but to.
Trust,
And help me if can, sir

And it would do you good to see the lovely postal card I sent an old but moral editor—when at the end of two days I had heard no report from the above rare messages—I began it somewhat in this manner:

"DEAR SIR—Can you do me any good, or in other words, do you know of anybody who can?

"As I was spoiled when young, I would like to ask you the following question, viz.: do you know of anybody who would like to bring somebody up—some family who would be pleased to bring me up in their own way.

"A Christian family, who are living, preferred; who don't use tobacco, or politics, or anything of a nicotine nature, and also wouldn't misuse me when I might feel like having my own way.

"O my dear sir, to be brought up in this manner would give me a new and startling insight into that of which I have long been ignorant, the art of true bringing up.

"And I assure you that my first spending-money will be used in your behalf.

"But, sir, if you can not find a small family, a smaller one might do. Secure me for some one at any rate, as I am in a hurry to begin, and thus you will benefit a small family, and confer a perpetual favor on my friends."

If this don't bring me sweet peace, I cried,
Then there is no sweet peas for me, I sighed,

as I glanced over and wearily folded this last emanation of hitherto unrequited genius, which I trusted might be the germ of a gay henceforth.

One day and eleven minutes skulked by and I felt completely tripped up. In this mode I spilt my ink, cut my finger nails tight, and leaning a gloomy elbow 'gainst the window, mused on the passers by. Men from every clime were there, from the classic Norwegian to the scientific wanderer, and heedless African. And then I cried,

O, I will go,
I don't know where,
I don't care, so
I have a change—
Oh, I will range
The universe.
I can't do worse
Than here to stay
Another day.
Ah, yes—ah, yes
I'll make, I guess,
A little visit
Around my home—
The world. I'll miss it
Unless I roam
From this bald spot
At once—I'll not
Linger longer,
To be stronger—
I've tried it long enough.

The way grows but more rough
As I progress,
With less and less
Of happiness.
Wall Street—good-bye!
I'm going; I
Will tell to you my story.
Before I go,
That you may know,
The texture of my glory.
My body made by God, is
As good as anybody's;
It is my right
To ramble quite
Away from you.
The world is mine,
I shall not pine
To stay from you.
Yes, Wall Street, farewell.

I will tell you my story for the benefit of anybody. For other young men who will be here and unhappy when I am

far away, who will come when I am gone—for the streams in Wall Street are ever full; from the north and south and east and west her tributaries flow. The floods of all the world sprinkle their drops in her's. The new come in and the old float out, and I, old and weary, will float out too.

No more thy dire concussion
  And elemental din
Shall fill me to confusion
  And other mental sin;
No more thou shalt concuss,
Farewell to all thy fuss.

"Oh, I will sing, lecture, travel, think, anything," I cried. Then deliverance seemed staring me in the face.

In this mood I decided to begin my career as a lecturer, and exultantly communed with another celebrated Brooklyn divine, thus:

"DEAR SIR—Would you be glad to have me cast a few pearl before your interesting congregation?—gems struck out of my soul by forced contact with the world as manifested in Wall Street; consisting of farm scenes, such as goose—flap-jacks, etc.

"With a little care, I bid fair to become a celebrated lecturer. I am willing to do my part anywhere and at any time, and if the world will improve its chance, I shall soon be a different spectacle. I heard you preach once and hope you will admire my ambition, I do so want to be immortal."

As soon as I had sent it, I began to collect my little gems, in order to polish and give them a suitable setting ere holding forth in all their lustre to the admiring throngs that would witness their beauty.

Then all my soul began to burn intense, to think how I

should charm the audience; as I had never lectured in public, I thought I would take some subject that I was used to, as I was unwilling to sacrifice any of my feelings to a failure; so I selected for my subject, Life, that most peculiar thing wherein most my experience had been. I thought of many beautiful beginnings to my lecture, but finally culled the following stately lines as most expressive and becoming to such a topic, viz.:

O life! thou mighty game of chance,
  Whence do we come, where do we go?
Some say that life is but a dance,
  And others say they do not know.
The babe to wear his father's pants,
    Is yearning;
While all the world into a trance
    Is turning.

I will not have space for all of the lecture now, but it was supreme. I wrote it all out before I slept, and with much effort condensed it into a size which could be told by rapid speaking in over two hours; at intervals, as I saw fit, I fitted in the gems of which I spoke, in this manner, viz.:

"To all lovers of the domestic flap-jack, I would say, in the words of my delightful little pastoral:

"From the buckwheat tops the frisky bee
    Ambrosial nectar makes,
While man, unwilling to be beat
By a bumble-bee on things to eat,
    Composes buckwheat cakes."

I also had a few lovely lines on a stone I had once seen; also a few on a brindled cow I once owned, with only two handles to her milky way, but I will no longer discuss the lustre of my gems, with which my lecture was so ornate, ex-

cept to point for an instant to my frog, which I had collected with much zeal. This frog was owned by my grandfather, living in a swamp behind the back yard, near the orchard. But my grandfather, being an old man, was fond of an early bed, and his grandson, being a young man, wasn't.

But this made no difference. When in the twilight, I saw his finger pointing to the chamber-door, I was conscious that my unwilling path lay up the narrow stairs.

Still I didn't always go to bed, but cautiously stealing to the window I would sit and hear that frog gurgle and sputter in unlimited exuberance.

He was my only company, and I rejoiced that his grandfather had no influence over his hilarious freedom. Hour after hour I would listen, wishing I was a frog, until the fog, wakened from its swampy couch, and winking silently at the moon, rose to hush his blunt twang. Never since have I heard music so comforting, never such cadences soothing; every sputter vibrating in his slimy thorax roused kindred in my own which I recall at will, and the picture I give you in "Ode to a Frog," is only the painted fragments of song of said frog going back to chaos on the quiet breath of a springy eve.

Thou stutt'ring warbler of a springy eve,
Redundant frog!
What man or woman ever would believe—
Tho' all agog
With greedy wish
To hear thy brindling groan
In frisky undertone—
Thou art no fish?

Zealous I list thy bulging throat,
Stubbed and queer,
Thrust out its gleeful zigzag note
Upon my ear.

Like wayward zephyr
Bursting with tune,
Or brow-beaten heifer
Yawning too soon.

Refulgent frog!
Ventriloquist!
Upon a log
Within the mist

Quaintly thou sittest
And boldly spittest
Thy brittle song
Forth, broad and long.

I love to hear you mumble
On a log;
To grunt and growl and grumble
At the fog;
To puff and pout and tumble
In the bog;
Oh, I love to hear you mumble;
To grunt and growl and grumble,
To puff and pout and tumble
In the bog, bog, bog;
To mumble, grumble, tumble,
Humble frog.

But my days of frog are o'er,
Farewell!
I have wandered from thy shore,
I shall see thee never more—
Farewell!

To-night I pace a city's street,
Farewell!
No frog is here
With swampy utterance to greet,
Or swell
A sleeping cadence on my ear.

To and fro
I walk in vain
To catch some slight
Memento
Of thy strain
At dim twilight.

No modern sound of organ
Or of lute,
Farewell!
Can charm me from the jargon
Of thy flute,
Farewell!

Ah, me!
Oh! what would I not give
One short hour to relive
With thee!

Ah, the tunes you used to utter:
How my senses all would flutter
Once again,
Just to hear one rambling mutter;
Just one little slimy sputter
As I heard it then!

Happy guzzler
Of the bog,
Mystic puzzler—
Farewell, frog!

While eagerly awaiting the message from the Brooklyn divine bidding me come at once, I continually practiced on the delivery of my marvelous success. Two days went, and no answer. Likewise another, and still likewise, until at last I cried, "Alas! he too is a follower of Mam." But, hark! finally it came. O exalted moment! Have you ever, on receiving a letter from a lover or admirer, held it long and delightedly in your fingers, loth to break the seal by his or her interesting lips moistened, treasuring it several hours, perhaps, all unbroken, content with the sense of possessing it, like a hungry man nibbling the edge of a strawberry shortcake until his feelings o'ercome him and the shortcake? If so, you will get an insight into my feelings. Tenderly pressing it to my cheek, and clasping my hands, I sung, danced, looked in the looking-glass, and drank two glasses of ice water, while I decided to spend my next summer out of town—in Saratoga and other festive spots. A minute I held the influential missive to the light, but finally, as the cat wearies herself as well as the mouse, so I broke the bounds and committed to memory these words:

"Young man, I would encourage you to diverge from the city as a means of subsistence. I would also advise you not to lecture. You had better fish. I will do my duty towards you for two pairs of codfish."

But, oh! it was too wayward to reveal, and a great scorching tear rose, flourished, and fell in my presence.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Forgive me if the vanishing clouds in the blue sky of imagination, chilled by this frigid and unseemly blast, shivered, shrinking together, and dripped adown my cheek. It was then that I would have wished to give up, but before I had a chance to moralize, another letter came, thus:

"DEAR NIL—Your cheese is on its way; it is a good cheese, and I do hope you will come home as soon as you you have eat it up. "Ever your "KEZIA."

> O lovely, lovely fate, I cried, I'm saved, I'm saved,
> And all by a cheese; talk of wealth if you like,
> Of empire and glory if you please.

Condemn monarchs and ring thieves, ye who will. But he who speaks against the domestic cheese let his flesh quiver, let his molars ache, and refuse to masticate their daily bread. O cheese, thy strength is greater than an army, and thy virtue as pure as the milk which gave thee birth! O thou curdled delight!

> Cheese, cheese, fair cheese, I cried,
> Thou hast bro't me, sweet peace, my guide.

Did I eat that cheese? Time will reveal it, not the cheese.

No more did the vague question Why was I born? perplex me. No more did life's sorrows repress. And why, you may ask. Ah, the pet scheme of my very existence suddenly shot dazzling before me. No longer should I wander sad among men. No more should a wrinkled brow tell of a shrunken heart.

Long had the sorrows of the poor hurt me. Much had their corroding looks corroded me. Much had I pondered on their lack of interest in things—ever wandering, restless as if hunting for something they can't find worth looking at. Secretly I had determined, if the time ever should come, when I could act natural, I would get up something for their amusement, in the shape of a show. And the minute I became conscious of the cheese my spirits broke loose in this fashion: "O lovely fate! The poor can have their show at last. Yes, yes, the way is clear; they shall be comforted. Oh, they shall come from every place; from east and west and see my show. Every man, woman, and child. The poor shall come and not the rich, and see my wonders huge, and blossoms rare; my rhinoceros and my parrot; my camel and my toad."

But right in the midst of my show in came my employer, with his hands in his pocket. Quickly I tried to fix upon a plan. Nothing suggested itself but to talk it over with him; so after a suitable time had elapsed uselessly, I began by asking him if he could put me in communication with a responsible owner of a jungle. He looked puzzled, while I continued: "I am getting up a little honest show for the poor for five cents, and would you care if I should put a small but select parcel of wild animals in your back office for a few days, if I will let you have the lion's cage under your desk, so you can joke with the lion when lonely?" Well, it would have puzzled Socrates the look he gave me. I didn't know whether he would laugh or not. Finally he said he didn't care to joke, and if I wasn't more careful I could leave, so from personal motives I smothered my

feelings; but full of my marvelous plot, I determined to show it to the public. Yes, I would fling my cheese to the breeze, knowing that it would save me.

And again I communed with a public man, thus:

"DEAR SIR—I would not be frivolous, but do you know of anybody who would trade a tame kangaroo for a cheese? The cheese is home-made, and was sent to me as a present, but I prefer kangaroo. You will see that I am struggling to get up an animated garden for the cultivation and fun of the poor—for five cents. A good cheap show will do more toward making a worthless kus happy and energetic than pills. Now this is my method: First, my cheese, as you see, is the main element of the show; it is the seed from which it grows. It may seem small to begin on, but the oak begins in an acorn. I want to get my animals first-class, second-hand goods that have lost value in the panic. I would prefer those brought up on a slim diet, that can stand the climate, if the show don't pay. I also wish you to tell me the kind of animal that takes best with poor folks (except the cow)?

"I am ready to begin my show as soon as I get my stock—plenty of poor folks waiting—and will be more. I also have a great curiosity to buy an old shark cheap; one used to the world preferred, and capable of neglect. I consider this kind of animal most instructive to poor folks, and safest to inspect by those who have all the time to themselves. Of course I must begin small and increase. I expect to buy a new animal per month when I am well a running. It is very hard to make a selection among so many rare beasts—but do you know of anybody who would lease me a monster for two weeks, till I could pay for him. There is a style of poor folk that revels in monsters. One that understands his business, and wouldn't molest anybody for five cents, preferred. I would also like to be put on the track of a small but self-supporting native cub, just deprived of its bear, for which I will trade dried apples. His business will be to torment

the shark for the amusement of my kang, and other visitors. I would also like a porcupine, for variety and ornament, to perplex my cub. I would also desire somebody to send me a picture of a practical ro-buck, with the view of purchasing, to butt the monster when convenient, or any time he can get a chance; also one monkey to jump for strangers, and wind his tail around things and swing—length of tail no object; if cheaper without, leave it behind; also one tin-peddler, which must not be handled, as he cheats; and one Chinese organ-grinder, to pacify my pets if they should act too overbearing. In conclusion, let me add, that I hanker after confidential proposals for the supplying me with a spotted wild-ass' colt, in case I should suddenly find it necessary to travel for my health.

"I forgot to mention that my employer, being a very vile and narrow-minded man, is not perfectly persuaded as yet to let me have my pets in his back office, for the sake of great inducements. But as I have no time nor disposition to trifle, I thought that perhaps you might know of some one who would like to lend me a back yard, 25x50, for the fuller developments of my pets. If you will be so meritorious as to help me secure these few artricles, you will be the means of much hilariousness to the poor of all sex. I would prefer everything warranted self-preserving, or capable of intense motion, as I shall hardly be able to buy cages at first, turning them in altogether. To the owners of said back yard, I would give in payment a free pass to the show day times; also the use of my shark nights, and the children, if big enough, could play with the cub. But in order to protect myself, I would say that I'd rather not have the servant girls fooling round the back yard, and standing on my shark's back to hang up clothes, thereby depriving the poor of their unexpected treat. Neither would I wish the cook to leave the window open while she roasts meat, so the smells of said meat extend to the back yard, making themselves evident to the cub, as window panes is no object to him when his stomach is wrong. Neither would I advise

said cook, when lonely, to seek sympathy around the monster, as he is fond of cooks. I would also suggest to owners of back yard not to dictate with my pets, if they have anything else to do. For which service I will present them with a little book of poems, consisting mostly of odes to toads, such as—

He has no ode,
  The toad;
He is no owl,
Nor can he howl.
He is so blunt,
He can not even grunt.
But yet he is no fool,
  The toad;
He sits under his stool,
Home-made and soft,
And looks aloft.

His joy is in his tongue,
All coiled his mouth among,
Watching for flies,
They are the food
On which the toad
  Delights.
  Their bites
Are pleasing in his eyes,
For when they come,
Buzzing with fun,
  To see what he's about,
Like light he thrusts it out.
It is a sickle,
With it he loves to tickle
The flies, and reaps 'em in,
It is no sin.
He is a toad,
And has no weight,
Of late or hate,
Or any other load.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Oh, ecstacy! again the world was in its place; gleams from a celestial region warmed me in entrancing embraces. My cheese had set agoing all the tropical vibrations of every African jungle under happy heaven, in all their clamorous intensity. Oh! how they thrilled and danced in me, from the dusky elephant to the howling sycophant and the New England bat! Oh! how joyful would be the poor at the sight of my long cages full of denizens of those jungles! Oh! it will be sweet to witness the poor, weary, wandering group, clasping ecstatic hands and weeping for

five cents. And my vision grew broader, while long lines of cages stretched away to the horizon, and I saw all the world coming to my poor show for five cents.

Wild at my sudden sense of freedom, I began to prepare an attractive programme.

Oh! it shall be startling and complete, was my song.

Ho! all the world,
Come to my show,
Got up expressly for everybody.
Come, ye who are good;
You will feel better.
Come, ye who are bad;
You will feel good.
Come, old man;
It will teach you to live correctly.
Come, old woman;
It will make you stop fretting.

My show will compose a Southern policy, and will enable the young man struggling for his daily bread to struggle for more.

It is a great stimulant to orphans, and will be the means of a new idea to young ministers and others, as, for instance, my joke on the cork, which can be used several times without hurting either the joker or the cork.

My show is chiefly for the poor and anybody.

For the next three months I shall show my pets for the benefit of Wall street, the poorest set I ever met—yet I love them. Come, buy tickets, bring your children and children's children down to the fourth generation—and to my show.

Ah, you who hunt for gold and silver, little do you know

3d. If any meek person shall be offended at anything about my show, and don't look with approval on my shark, his money shall be promptly refunded as soon as I am done with it.

4th. If any body is bit by the kangaroo, both parties shall be fined, if we can find them.

5th. Do not attempt to trifle with my cub by pulling his tail, as he is too independent to brook such an extreme drawback, and his action might not please.

6th. Do not poor hot water on my porcupine's back; he don't need it.

7th. Do not scatter tobacco juice in the eyes and ears of my shark. You might as well not come.

8th. Do not reach out and pinch the wild ass' colt, unless you are used to such things.

9th. Do not meddle with the monkey's wisdom teeth, just for the sake of seeing if he has any.

10th. I have arranged for the poor who are most sad a prolonged programme, which they can enjoy at leisure, if able—for five cents more, viz.:

To tickle the kangaroo and make him look like a fool.

Ha, ha! It will cure any disease on earth, except the torments of a nuisance, to witness it.

When I felt worst, I hired a man who had retired from active pursuits to tickle the kang. It acted like a charm. I haven 'tslept since, it was so joyful. But the retired man couldn't endure it. He died laughing, and, I trust, happy.

11th. I have also fixed a place for the old folks to play with the shark. It is perfectly safe. He is of a retiring nature; but don't get near his tail.

12th. For old ladies and their children I have made a saddle for the colt, which, for the sake of five cents, will be properly annexed to him, if we can catch him. After which they may ride as long as they have time.

I would only advise the old ladies who are bound to ride, to eat heartily before coming; and it wouldn't be a bad plan to fill the pockets with pop-corn, ginger-snaps, or dried beef and other arrangements, providing you are in the habit of eating between meals, as the colt don't stop for several days. But, on no account, allow yourself to go asleep on his back. Better save your energy 'gainst the instant of his stoppage.

Of course you are not expected to know when that will be, as he never changes his gait except along toward the last day, when he goes rather faster, if anything, taking three steps where he took but one. At last, condensing all his remaining energy in one awful effort, he stops, right in the midst of things, in less than the invisible fraction of an instant, just where he is.

I only speak of this to let you know his way, so that you can be getting used to it.

I would add, as a warning, that none are allowed to ride unless at peace with their neighbors and clear of conscience.

13th. I have decided to make this great concession, viz.: If any man, woman, or orphan, of good standing, and free from debt, coming to my show with a pure motive, not doubting my capabilities as a man of honor and a rewarder of virtue—I repeat, if any such person comes and gazes delightedly on all, and grows enthusiastic and wild over things, and is finally eat up by the monster when neither of

the parties expected it, I move, in such event, that I return the five cents to the bereaved family, with a complimentary ticket to come and visit the tomb at random; and finally, when my show is over, my monster shall be delivered up to them as a keepsake.

All the other particulars will appear on the bills, such as do not tempt the Ro-buck in any direction, as space is nothing to him when his interests are at stake; also strive not to pick up an acquaintance with the wild cat without an introduction. He wouldn't understand you, and might seem saucy.

When I reached this point I was pouring at every pore, including my eyes, and ardently burst forth into—

Oh, signs of the millennium are in the air,
When the wild animal and the hyena shall let the tiger be,
And the lion and the cub shall lie down in peace together;
When the panther and the pig shall eat together,
And the baboon and the camel no more shall kick the hog,
Nor the leopard plague the mule;
When the monkey and the wild cat shall meet without embarrassment,
And the torpedo and the earthquake shall kiss the kangaroo;
When the ostrich and the porcupine shall play cross-tag together,
And the oyster and the stork be as one—for five cents.
When the bumble-bee no more shall prick the toad,
Nor the codfish chase the goose and polar bear;
When the wild ox and the crab shall eat popcorn together,
And the globule and the dreg shall settle up;
When the sliver and the calf shall make no fuss at once;
Nor the brute torment the bug,
Nor the bug afflict the kus,
Nor the coot confuse the gump.

One more mighty effort and I am done, was my cry. One final message to the world, and then, farewell!

Hear me, O ye nations!
I am coming,
I shall soon be with you.
Tell your near relations
I am coming.
Bring your neighbors and their nabes;
Mothers, educate your babes—
Get 'em ready for their treat,
It will do them good to meet
My little show.
It will make them crow
To hear the wild cat yell
And see the monster swell.
Everybody come
All must see my show,
All with joy shall hum,
Ere they from it go.

A iittle money properly spent for a ticket to my show will do you more good than you need.

Oh! how my heart warms to think how the old folks will renew their youth at the sight of the "Bill of Fare" provided for their entertainment, such as:

1. Whole show..... 5 cents.
2. To pat the cub and pull his tail..... 5 "

Children too.

3. " tickle the kang..... 5 "
4. " cuff the wild cat..... 6 "
5. " kick the colt..... 4 "
6. " ride the colt, prepaid..... 5 "
7. " choke the porcupine..... 3 "

Children half price.

8. " fool with the monster..... 8 "
9. " frighten the shark..... 7 "
10. " throw snuff in the cub's eye..... 9 "
11. " tie your card to the Ro-Buck's horn, so he will know you when you come again..... 4 "
12. " throw tar at the monkey..... 1 "

But bring yourown tar.

13. To pick up a private fuss with any of my pets..... 6 cents.
14. " chase the whole set generally, no charge, as as they do not lose by it in the long run.

Come, all who are sorry,
  Come, all who are sad
With turmoil and worry,
  Rejoice and be glad.
Come, where my Can-go-roo
  Works for no recompense,
All of you can go too—
  All for five cents.

Well, who would have thought it
  (Come, ye who are dark,)
Unless I had wrought it?
  Come, witness my shark,
One wink of his eye
  Will pay you for coming,
And his tail merrily
  Sets all things a humming.
And all for five cents,
Come, ere you go hence.

Come, poverty-struck
  From out the hub-bub,
A streak of good luck
  You will see in my cub.

  To hurt him, fear not,
He takes care of himself,
  For this was he bo't—
He is a gay elf.

O come and see
  The monkey prick
The wild ass. He
  Will gaily kick
In rapid strokes
  The Ro-buck till
The buck provokes
  The monster's will
By horrid pokes
  Of his long bill.

The porcupine
Will quake and whine;
The kangaroo
Will jump and koo;
The cub will howl,
The wild cat scowl,
And spit, etc., ending in a general
  good feeling for five cents.

Reserved seats among my pets same, price.

Vale!

NIL RAVEN.

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